FAITH AND THE ACT OF FAITH

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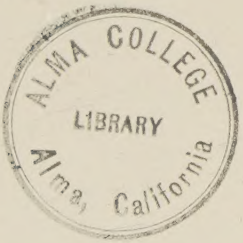
FAITH AND THE ACT OF FAITH

By Rev. J. V. BAINVEL, S.J.

AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION FROM THE THIRD FRENCH EDITION

By LEO C. STERCK



B. HERDER BOOK CO.,
15 & 17 SOUTH BROADWAY, ST. LOUIS, MO.,
AND
33 QUEEN SQUARE, LONDON, W. C.
1926

402

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Vail-Ballou Press, Inc., Binghamton and New York

FROM THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THIS little work is not meant to be a complete treatise on Faith. It is rather to be a detailed study of one particular point, and as thorough as it has been possible to make it. Assuredly this point is of capital importance and the whole question of Faith depends upon it; for, once we have seized the heart of the problem, little or no difficulty is experienced in understanding and explaining the rest. The point in question is the psychology of Faith.

What precisely is the meaning which we attach to the words, "I believe?" Is it to know? and if so, what is the nature of this knowledge? Is it an intellectual act, and what is the mechanism of this act in which the mind is not determined to assent by the evidence of its object? If the will comes into play, what is the nature of this intervention? If grace enters into it, what part does it play? An act of faith, we are told, is not a logical conclusion from evident premises, still it is a reasonable and logical act. How is this possible? Briefly, this work has for its special object to give an outline of the true nature and the exact notion of faith and also of

its psychological mechanism. It describes the different causes which produce it—what Theology calls the analysis of Faith and of the Act of Faith.

This is the first attempt, if not to put this delicate question before the public, at least to make it accessible to everybody. And such an attempt seems timely indeed; until recently it had been sufficient to show the reasonableness of faith, to solve its main difficulties, and to disprove the ever recurring objection that we do not believe without a motive. To theologians might be confined the task of analyzing this complex act and of studying its intimate nature. Recently many theories of knowledge are before the public attention. All thinking men, after Kant and Descartes, feel the need of instituting the criticism of their own reason and ideas. Many fail in the attempt, satisfied with a convenient scepticism, a frivolous dilettantism, on the whole based on Kantianism and undermined by a mild subjectivism, allowing to each individual, with a small amount of dogmatism, without which no one can get along, the flattering liberty to question everything and to end up by holding nothing. Still these attempts are interesting and the question of Belief seems to be especially attractive since Mr. Balfour and M. Brunetière have shown that these are vital problems and that we can neither expect everything from a science powerless to redeem its fantastic promises, nor be for ever satisfied with artistically

chiselled Renanesque phrases, high sounding platitudes or clever skirmishes between contradictories; nor again scorn the imperious voice of our nature, demanding (no matter what sophists may say) a truth, a morality, a religion, and sound principles. Thinkers nowadays pause with sympathetic curiosity before this enigma of the Christian Faith. We no longer hear sarcastic or spiteful laughter; the time is gone when orators would express poetic regret for ancient legends and antiquated "cradle-songs"; writers are no longer satisfied with the simple, purely speculative study of the observer, the historian, or the philosopher. They seriously ask themselves once more whether we could not find in Christian Faith, besides moral and social salvation, the profound truth and perhaps the great light destined to enlighten reason itself; they eagerly seek to observe at closer range the nature of this faith so bitterly attacked and haughtily disdained, which, in spite of all, attracts and fascinates minds craving for rest, tired of scepticism, hungry for a truth that transcends the mere statements of science.

Neither can the believers dodge these questions: not only for the sake of others, so as to be able to give an account of their faith to those who are seeking an explanation and to rectify prevalent misconceptions, but also for their own sake. For while rationalists are forever harping on the stale slogan of the antagonism between reason and faith, Kant's

ideas emerge from the fog and succeed in getting a stronger hold on minds, impregnating them with the theory of a sentimental faith without dogma, a faith reduced to a vague religious feeling, while the whole thing is made alluring by scientific pretence and a mystic tone.

This essay, then, is addressed to all who are in any way concerned about the question of Faith. I sincerely hope that the professional theologians will not find fault with me for having aimed above all at clearness in the explanation of this rather intricate question.[1] If I cannot flatter myself to have converted those who may differ with me, I have at least made an attempt to expound correctly wherein lies the core of the difficulty, to state what is to be held as the teaching of the Church, and to point out what is to be regarded only as theological speculation. If some point remains obscure—who could hope to dispell every cloud?—it should be remembered that such is the case with every problem. In order to be able to answer every difficulty and to understand all truth, we must wait for the splendors of the beatific vision.

One cannot treat of the nature of Faith and try to analyze its mechanism without meeting every question connected with Faith. Some of those ques-

[1] This desire for clarity will explain—and we hope excuse—a goodly number of repetitions, which are quite unavoidable in order to show the different aspects of the subject.

tions, as, for instance, the necessity of faith and its irrevocability, seem to require a fuller development. Perhaps some day I may have a chance to treat them at length.

This book is not polemical. It does not even contain a direct allusion to the tumultuous controversies which have recently been raised against Faith and Apologetics. We have passed over the names of Balfour, Brunetière, Blondel, Payot, Sabatier, and others who have entered the arena. My purpose has been only to give a theological theory of Faith.[2] I am convinced that it suffices to expose one's position frankly, to answer one's adversaries, and that precise and certain ideas have just as much power to exclude,—no matter how seductive and specious they may be,—all errors and false theories, so as to give free admittance and a sympathetic welcome to the truth, no matter whence it may come and under what form it may present itself. The

[2] This theory is not a Catholic dogma, but only an attempt to explain what we know from dogma and to acquire a more exact, profound, and scientific idea of faith. I would have liked to pass over the controversies which divide theologians, not of course concerning dogma, but about its scientific explanation. But I could not have done it without mutilating the thesis which I set out to prove and believe to be true. On the other hand, I would have to change the character of this little book, or at least make it much more extensive. I have accordingly chosen the golden mean. I touch upon the general idea of the systems only in so far as it is necessary to understand the question at issue. Theologians are acquainted with whatever I have left out, and the average reader will not miss it.

worst enemies of Catholic doctrine are those who are ignorant of it or misrepresent it: for it is impossible to understand it without loving it. If virtue appeared before our eyes, says Plato, every heart would be subjugated by its attractiveness. And we may say as much for truth. May this work, in spite of its imperfections, aid to explain some ideas, dispel some misunderstandings, bring peace to some intellects, lead others who still sit in the darkness of unbelief towards this "admirable light," to which God calls those who are destined to see Him one day face to face in beatific vision! This is my sincere wish; and I offer, with a most filial heart, this modest study to her whom the Holy Ghost Himself, through the mouth of Elizabeth, has proclaimed "blessed because she believed."

FROM THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

Several important studies on Faith and the various questions relating to Faith have been published since the second edition of this booklet appeared. The most notable of these studies is Père Harent's article "Foi" in the "Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique" by Vacant-Mangenot. No one has approached the questions of faith and treated them with such vast erudition and profound analysis as Father Harent. One could almost call his article

exhaustive, if the subject did not remain inexhaustible. Next we might mention the work of the Rev. Fr. Compaing, entitled *Notre Foi* (1916). Father Compaing's book discloses in the depths to which it not infrequently attains, an atmosphere that is highly moral and religious. I, myself, contributed the article to the "Dictionnaire Apologétique" of Jaugey-D'Alès, entitled "Foi-Fidéisme." There I stated the principal points on the subject which interest not only the apologist, but all who wish to know the Catholic position.

The late lamented Father Rousselot, my colleague at the Catholic Institute of Paris, has given many a fresh and striking explanation of the question in the *Recherches de Science Religieuse,* the *Revue de Philosophie,* and the *Revue Néo-Scholastique,* between the years 1910 and 1914. Father Huby followed him in a few points in the *Recherches* and the *Études* of 1918 and 1919. Recently Father Bliguet has begun an interesting study on the unity of the act of Faith in the *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques.* Father Gardeil, O. P., has written a fine book on *La Crédibilité et l'Apologétique,* which was reprinted in 1912 with notable improvements and useful additions.

In the preface to the second edition of this volume I stated that I had failed to notice any noteworthy difference of opinion between him and myself

concerning the subject of my book. I retracted my statement in an article written for the *Revue Pratique d'Apologétique*. I directed the attention of the reader particularly to what the author calls the "suppléances subjectives" of credibility. Father Gardeil answered and took the offensive. He attributed to me certain opinions which were never held by me, notably the one concerning the *entitatively* supernatural act. I did not, however, feel myself obliged to answer him. But I reread the pages of my book which he criticised, namely, Ch. III, § 3, and concluded not to change anything. Let me refer those who wish more information on that point to my book *De Vera Religione et Apologetica* and to my study on the Apologetical Problem, published first in the *Revue de l'Institut Catholique de Paris,* of May, 1905, and reprinted in *De Vera Religione* (Appendix II).

As to the difference of opinion between Father Rousselot and myself, be it sufficient to state that I can not agree with his thesis that it is *impossible* for all men, whether learned or ignorant, to give a purely natural assent to the motives of credibility, whatever they may be (miracles, prophecies, etc.) and however convincing they may be in themselves. Neither can I agree with him when he says that the light of faith is absolutely necessary to perceive the value (plainly real and objective) of the best and surest reasons for believing. I willingly

admit that the whole process of credibility, which ends in faith, is practically and in fact made under the influence of grace; but I refuse to believe that it would be *impossible* to see the rational value of every motive of credibility without the help of grace, and especially without the light of faith. It seems to me that St. Thomas admits that in this world there is such a thing as evidence of purely rational credibility, which entails assent. I fail to see in the words of St. James, *"Daemones credunt et contremiscunt"* (not to mention the *"Scio qui sis, Sanctus Dei,"* of the Gospel) anything but that in the angelic world the assent is forced, and *a fortiori* when there is question of the mere possibility of an assent which is not forced. Such is really the impression one gets from reading the third chapter of the Constitution *"Dei Filius"* and other ecclesiastical documents.

In maintaining this possibility of natural credibility and the possible distinction between the judgment of faith and the judgment of credibility, we do not mean that these judgments are always distinct in the concrete because they differ in the mental analysis of the theologian. A virtual distinction is sufficient.

I do not pretend to have spoken the last word on this delicate question, nevertheless I consider myself on the side of the Vatican Council when I treat the questions of credibility and Faith sep-

arately and insist upon the objective value of rational credibility. I admit, however, that the judgments of credibility are made, *ut oportet*, only under the influence of grace; still carefully abstaining from any statement as to the existence, in this world, of a faith of authority which would be purely natural and given upon the sole word of God.

I never dreamt of regarding as exclusively mine the theory of faith which pervades this book and which rests substantially on the distinction between faith of science and faith of authority, or Christian faith. This distinction is not my own, but borrowed from Cardinal Billot, and for me it has been the searchlight which has illumined the difficult analysis of the act of faith. I have written my book solely to make this distinction known to others and thus to secure a larger circulation for an explanation of the act of Faith which seemed to me clear and coherent.

THE AUTHOR

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PART I

WHAT DOES IT MEAN "TO BELIEVE"?

CHAPTER I

THE QUESTION OF FAITH

I

EVERY man continually makes acts of faith,—from the infant who believes everything on the word of its mother, to the scholar who believes his colleague when he describes an interesting experiment and the servant who greets him with the news that an unknown gentleman called on him during his absence.

In the same manner Catholics continually make acts of faith upon the word of God: the child who believes and loves, one could almost say by instinct, as his mother tells him to; or the ordinary woman, who has never examined the roots of her belief, yet accepts everything on the authority of her pastor, which she receives from the Church as the summary of Christ's life and doctrine of the Church and the Gospel; or the audacious and sometimes restless philosopher and scholar who "reposes tranquilly upon the word of God." [1]

[1] These words are taken from a prayer attributed to St. Thomas.

Now this act, so simple, so frequent, so natural,—this may be said in a sense even of the supernatural act of faith,—is not by any means easy to analyze.

In this respect, it is true, the act of faith resembles many others, for instance, the act of love, which is much more easily made than observed and described. Moreover, the supernatural act of faith seems replete with special difficulties, so much so that the most fearless theologians, who are perfectly at ease when they explain the acts of hope and charity, are almost afraid to undertake an analysis of the act of Faith. Many of them say that the question is really much less complicated than it is supposed to be, and that their predecessors have only made it more obscure; but the very same thing is said, and more justly perhaps, after their own attempts.

II

Yet the question remains a tempting one. And what question can be more legitimate? Besides the psychological aspect, Faith has certainly done and is still doing the most remarkable things in this world. It holds such a large place in our lives and plays such an important rôle in the realm of the supernatural order that it is worth while to study and understand it. All mankind is concerned in this order, since it is the only historical and real order. It is a known fact, too, that public attention has

lately been directed in a particular manner to this question. Much is said and much is written about it.[2]

III

One of the reasons why some questions become obscure and consequently unintelligible to the ordinary reader, is the tendency of specialists to pass over those things which have become common property and to confine themselves to discussions and researches on special and difficult points, which are generally disputed and very often doubtful. These clever skirmishes among specialists disappoint, rather than interest, the uninitiated. This happens in all fields of knowledge, I presume, but it certainly is the case in theology, and in particular as regards the act of Faith, so that it is very difficult to get reliable information on this important question. Let us then start with the essentials and thus obtain a firm footing.

[2] Among those to whom I am most indebted for this work, I particularly mention Cardinal Billot's Introduction to his treatise *De Ecclesia* embodied in his *De Virtutibus Infusis, Prolegomenon de Fide,* pp. 194–215, Rome, 1901. It is only a sketch, but a masterly one.

CHAPTER II

TWO WAYS OF ARRIVING AT KNOWLEDGE: SCIENCE AND FAITH

I

MAN has two ways or means of arriving at knowledge: science and faith. I may know a fact because I have seen it with my own eyes; but I may know it also because someone has told me. I may have performed an experiment in chemistry or proved for myself a theorem in geometry; but I may have just as much real certitude about it on the word of another. Both ways of knowing are natural, both are reasonable. Doubtless direct science is the more perfect of the two, but evidently to know on faith is on many occasions the only knowledge that is possible. In most cases, even science is impossible without faith. A student who refuses to take anything on the authority of his teacher, for instance, will never learn anything; hence the saying, *"Oportet addiscentem credere"* (In order to learn, one must believe). Even though we may see or know a thing, we are usually not at all

loath to have the word of another as a guarantee. I may have seen clearly, I may have heard distinctly, I may have understood correctly,—at least so I think; but more than once I have been deceived under almost similar circumstances. I should be more at ease, therefore, I should be surer of my certitude, as it were, if I could confirm it by the certitude of one or more of my fellowmen, who, like me, have seen, heard, or understood.

We may go a step farther. Through science I have but my own knowledge, my own ideas, the truths seen by me personally. It is little indeed and it would be almost nothing if by faith I had not already borrowed from others their light and understanding, making their ideas mine and increasing my personal knowledge. Faith, which has rendered me many a good service, is ready to give even more. By Faith I can unite my mind to the mind of those that know, and thus appropriate their knowledge. They have searched, they have observed, they have thought, they have found. If I am willing to believe them, their researches, their observations, their reflections, their conclusions will become mine.[1] In many instances I shall be able

[1] It is clear then that faith is essentially a *"social"* mode of *knowing*:—through it I share in the knowledge of those who know,—clear also how faith depends ultimately on knowledge. No matter how numerous may be the intermediaries, we must finally come to somebody who knows, not by *faith,* but by *science,* whether that person be God or man. St. Thomas

to verify their statements, and, thanks to them, arrive as they did at direct knowledge. In other cases the *evidence of the authority,*—if I may be permitted to use a well known play on words—will make up for the *authority of the evidence,* and I shall be able, on the authority of another, to possess with certitude a truth which I have neither discovered nor seen for myself. In the words of St. Augustine, to be united to him who knows [2] is to know. We know then, not by the direct perception of the truth, which alone completely assures and satisfies our minds; but if knowing is to understand and to possess the truth, then we know with absolute certitude and security.

II

Besides direct or personal knowledge, there is, then, an indirect knowledge gained by appropriating the knowledge of others. That is Faith, a true and cer-

has said this so tersely that its deep expression seems almost naive: *"Quia in convictu hominum unus homo oportet quod alio utatur sicut seipso, in quibus ipse sibi non sufficit, ideo oportet quod stet illis quae alius scit et sunt sibi ignota, sicut his quae ipse cognoscit; et inde est quod in hominum conversatione est fides necessaria, qua unus homo dictis alterius credit." In Boeth. de Trin.*, qu. III, a. 1.

[2] *"Non parva pars scientiae est scienti coniungi." Enar. in Psalm.*, 36, Sermo 2, n. 2; Migne, *P. L.*, Vol. xxxvi, 364.

tain knowledge, under the required conditions. The holy Fathers have dwelt at length on its necessity, its advantages, and its claims to our assent, which are unquestionable.[3] The philosophers recognise its claim to be reasonable and legitimate knowledge. In a word, scepticism in regard to faith is no less a sin against common sense, nor less impossible in practice, than scepticism in regard to science. It may appear strange to the reader that we insist so much upon an evident and commonly accepted truth. Our only excuse is that this elementary truth is too frequently forgotten, not only by unbelievers, who reduce faith to a natural and blind instinct, irrelevant to reason or science, but also by those popular theorists, confessedly or unconsciously disciples of Kant or Schleiermacher, who, like the unbeliever and the sceptic, describe as Christian Faith some vague religious sentiment, a spontaneous creation of the heart; a faith without dogma and without objective truth; a faith lacking the first necessary condition of legitimacy and reasonableness,—that of being a reasoned, true, and certain knowledge. Sometimes even Catholics in their eagerness not to lay themselves open to the reproach

[3] See the letter of St. Augustine, *De Utilitate Credendi,* Migne, *P. L.,* xlii, 63; *De Fide Rerum quae non Videntur,* Migne, and also the treatise *De Videndo Deo* (*Epist.* 147; Migne, *P. L.,* vol. xxxiii, 596).

of having a dead faith, or a purely abstract "intellectual" faith, too readily accept these ideas of a sentimental religiosity, and do not seem to be able to distinguish false mysticism,—the very thing we have been constantly accused of during the first three-quarters of the 19th century,—from real Faith and Catholic mysticism. It is a fact that this vague sentimentalism is an important item in the religious stock of many Protestants. This is rather alarming, for, at times, it may be questioned whether such souls still retain the strict requisites in matters of faith in Jesus Christ and revealed truth. Such a condition is to be pitied, and instead of joining their ranks, we should cling closer to our mother the Church, who remains forever "the column and groundwork of truth"; we should draw closer to Jesus, "full of grace and truth," who is "the way and the life" only because He is "the truth." The "Catholic Faith" is a collection of truths. To possess the Catholic Faith is to know and to believe these truths. There is no room in the religion of Christ for Kantian subjectivism, *viz.,* that logical and consistent subjectivism which will not admit in direct and practical knowledge what it rejects in theory. That Faith which is at the basis of Christianity, which, in the words of the councils, is "the beginning of salvation, the foundation and the root of all justification"; that faith without which it is

impossible to please God, is "a supernatural virtue, by which, prepared and aided by the grace of God, we hold as true what He has revealed." [4] This faith can never be reconciled with a wavering religious sentimentalism, destitute of foundation and object. Faith without dogma is not the Christian Faith, for the Christian Faith is unthinkable without truths enunciated by God, which, like the Divine Truth Himself, are unchangeable and superior to all systems and philosophies.

[4] *Concil. Trid.*, Sess. vi, c. 6 and 8; *Conc. Vatic.*, Constitution *"Dei Filius,"* c. 3. Let us recall also the Athanasian creed, the beginning and end of which shock Protestant sentiments, and we are sorry to say, also those of certain Catholics. *"Haec est fides catholica, quam nisi quisque fideliter firmiterque crediderit, salvus esse non poterit."* This is the conclusion. Here is the beginning: *"Quicumque vult salvus esse, ante omnia opus est, ut teneat catholicam fidem, quam nisi quisque integram inviolatamque servaverit, absque dubio in aeternum peribit."* Now this faith, necessary for salvation, is faith in specific dogmas: *"Fides autem catholica haec est, ut unum Deum in Trinitate,* etc." I know that it is not necessary to believe *explicitly* all the articles of our faith in order to be saved. But this does not apply to faith without dogma. I know that God wills the salvation of all men and I admit that no one will be damned by his fault; but I must also hold that, "without faith it is impossible to please God." (Hebr. xi, 6). There is question here, let us remember, of a *knowing* faith and an *explicit* knowledge. The Apostle, in fact, adds immediately: "For he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and is a rewarder to them that seek Him." And the Church, through the mouth of Innocent XI, has condemned the following proposition: "Faith in one God seems alone necessary for salvation, and not

It is painful to have to insist so much on these fundamental truths. Christian Faith will rise triumphantly out of the present crisis—if there is really a crisis,—as it came out of so many others, with renewed lustre, and it will once more be demonstrated —there is no greater and more glorious presumption in behalf of supernatural truth than this—that no one can touch our dogmas without at the same time mutilating reason.

explicit faith in God as the rewarder. "There is question of a faith which has for its motive the authority of God, and which consequently supposes a certain knowledge of the fact of revelation; for Innocent XI has condemned the following proposition: "The assent of supernatural faith, useful to salvation, can go with a purely probable knowledge of revelation, and even with the fear that God has not spoken." And again: "Faith in the broad sense, that is to say, knowledge resting upon the testimony of creatures or on any other motive of the same order, suffices for justification." This is not the place to inquire how this necessity of faith can be reconciled with the justice and goodness of God; in any case, the solution could never lie in the practical sacrifice of one dogma for another. A concise statement on this subject can be found in the papal allocution of December 9, 1854, which seems to be an *ex cathedra* pronouncement, like the condemnations cited above.

CHAPTER III

TWO KINDS OF FAITH:—THE FAITH OF SCIENCE AND THE FAITH OF SIMPLE AUTHORITY

To believe is to partake of the knowledge of a witness who knows what he tells and tells what he knows. This much everyone admits. Hence we can distinguish between faith and science, and give to each its proper share. Science sees and tells what it sees. Faith does not see, but understands, and, sure that what it is told is true, holds it as true. But we have not yet arrived at the complete notion of faith. We must push our analysis further.

I

Faith, taken as a firm adhesion of the mind to a certitude, is twofold. There is a faith founded on evidence,—not indeed upon the direct evidence of truth, which is science, but upon the evidence of testimony.[1] There is, on the other hand, a Faith founded upon the sole authority of a witness, upon

[1] Thus I translate the Latin expression: *"fides ex evidentia in attestante."* Literally, these words mean a faith which is based upon the evidence of the truth, appearing, not in itself, but in the authorised word of the witness. *Extrinsic evidence,* then, is the motive of this faith. It results from two previous

his word alone. This distinction is subtle, but it is important.

When I study history, I cannot directly verify the historian's assertions nor arrive at a *direct knowledge, i. e.,* science. I must content myself with faith. But I can make this faith strictly *scientific* by verifying the testimony. By means which in their last analysis are synonymous with science, I can ascertain that under given circumstances the witness is trustworthy; that he knows and that he tells the truth. It is after, or more exactly on account of and under the influence of, this verification that I give my assent. My adhesion to his statement is measured by the results of my verification. In one case I will adhere completely, because it is clear to me that the author has spoken the truth; in the other, I will assent, but reservedly, because to me it is only probable that he has spoken the truth; or again, I suspend my judgment or simply refuse to accept his testimony according as his word may seem to me without foundation or clearly false. I call this historical faith. Of the same kind is the faith of a judge in court. After everything has been said he trusts himself alone. The same is true of all faith which

verifications, and the analysis is simply this: It is evident to me that this witness says this, and that he is truthful. It is therefore evident (although I fail to see the thing itself) that the statement is true. It is a kind of evidence, but not intrinsic, whether mediate or immediate,—of the truth in itself.

in its last analysis is based upon the evidence of testimony. I call it faith because I do not think it possible for one to arrive at the direct evidence of truth, like the pupil who, guided by his master, can understand the proof of the problem and the logical conclusions that follow therefrom. But I also call it science: for this assent of faith is based entirely on the knowledge I have of the value of the testimony. It is, then, scientific faith. Thus, it is seen, faith is essentially *"discursive,"* as the Schoolmen say. It reminds me of a discourse, which may be simply implicit, bordering on the boundaries of the unconscious, hardly noticeable to the psychological analysis of faith.[2] But on closer investigation one finds it at the bottom of all assent of scientific faith. As is often the case in other easy reasoning processes, the mind glides, so to speak, over the self-evident premises. However, the premises have not been entirely forgotten; attentive reflection shows that the conclusion was reached only with the help of those premises. However rapid the process of reasoning may be and however direct it may seem, the assent of scientific faith is based upon a syllogism, which runs somewhat in this fashion: "A man tells me such and such a thing under such and such circumstances. Now a thing said under

[2] I use the word *"discourse"* because it comes closest to the Latin *discursus,* and because it expresses better the idea of the "process" or "progress" of thought.

these circumstances is a thing which I may hold as true. Consequently, I can hold as true what this person has said. Therefore, I believe it." Or, in a simpler form: "A statement that is duly guaranteed is a true statement. Now this statement is duly guaranteed; therefore it is true and I believe it." [3]

Such is the assent of scientific faith. Its formula is: "I believe because I see." Doubtless human faith is often of this sort. Such is the faith I have every time I believe *because* reason tells me that it is absurd or imprudent not to believe some one when I cannot obtain direct evidence of the truth of his statement. Such faith could often be more explicitly reasoned, less impulsive, and, therefore, more strictly scientific; but it is scientific faith as long as it relies upon the evidence of testimony.

II

Is this the only kind of assent of human faith? Is there none other, based not upon the evidence of

[3] This syllogistic assent of faith is often mistaken for the assent of *"mediate"* science, and it is looked upon as the evident conclusion from two evident premises. This is a mistake. The conclusion, "Therefore this saying is true" is not yet an act of faith, which is not a judgment upon the *truth of the statement,* but an affirmation of the thing stated. To affirm that this statement *"God became man"* is true is quite different from affirming, even by scientific faith, that *"God became man."* Cf. Billot, *l. c.,* p. 35, 1903 edition, p. 33; and *De Virtutibus infusis,* p. 200.—This note has been added only for the sake of clarity, for the distinction will not be needed in this work.

testimony, but upon the testimony itself, upon the sole word of the witness, logically unsupported by the perception of the nexus between the testimony and the truth? This faith, if there is such a faith, will be quite different from the former. Scientific faith is reducible to this formula: "I believe because (I see that) you speak the truth." The latter, which could be called Faith of simple authority, is more trustful: "I believe because you say it." Doubtless, to be reasonable, it *supposes* either an implicit or an explicit judgment, as in the case of the preceding formula: "What he tells me is true." But I do not *rest* my faith upon this evident judgment. My only motive is the authority of the speaker. I rest on it without any further question and I abstract from the previous evidence: "He has said it, I believe." [4]

Is there such a faith? Many deny it or come very near denying it. They do not even seem to be able to conceive it. They fail to understand a full intellectual assent which is not traceable to evi-

[4] Coninck, one of the great theologians of the Louvain school, and a worthy disciple of Lessius, expresses this difference in a felicitous way. Faith on simple authority, he says, *"nititur testimonio Dei formaliter sumpto, sive quatenus praecise habet rationem testimonii."* The other, faith of science, does not rest upon the sole testimony as such, taken in itself, but only *"quatenus est evidens signum veritatis ipsius rei revelatae."* The latter rests on the authority of the reasons, the former on the authority of the statement, and consequently of the person speaking.

dence, evidence being the ultimate motive and criterion of certitude. Others admit it in supernatural faith, but deny it implicitly or explicitly in the case of natural faith; the latter really amounting to evidence, whilst the former rests, without more ado, upon divine authority. Others, finally, find this kind of faith both in natural and supernatural faith, and in this respect do not see any difference between the two.

We accept this last solution as the true one. Take the case of a child, for instance. Do we not find in him faith in its simplest, purest, and most naïve form? Now the child's faith is characterized by this—that he adheres, without any question, to the word of another. "Father or mother has said it," this is enough for him. The child believes with absolute certitude. Does it occur to him to investigate what his parents have told him? Does he measure his assent by the motives he has for accepting the words of his parents? Of course not. When he attains the use of reason, he has, or may have, a confused idea of these motives. (Note that this implicit idea is necessary in order that his faith be subjectively reasonable.) But this previous necessary idea is neither the proper motive nor the measure of his assent. If the thought of doubting occurred to him, he could reassure himself by recalling his *"reasons for believing."* But the true and only motive of his faith is the authority of his

parents. Later he may find out that his credulity has led him into error; he will refuse to believe unless he has good reasons for believing; he will lose some of his simple, blind faith, and will often say with the incredulous Apostle, *"Nisi videro, non credam."* Yet, for the time being, the word of his mother is sufficient. Whether this faith, based upon the sole testimony of another, is reasonable, is a different question. For the moment the only thing we wish to know is whether it exists. The example of the child is sufficient to justify an affirmative answer. If we examine closely, we see,—with a few rare exceptions in the case of people whose actions all tend to become deliberate,—that in practical life, we ourselves possess this faith, or at least this tendency to believe on the authority of another. Even if we do not often grant this confidence, which is the necessary basis of the faith to which we are referring; even if we are careful to make a critical investigation of the authority before we grant such confidence,—this investigation itself is not contrary to the faith in question, as long as it remains one of the preparatory acts and does not enter as a motive into our assent itself. There are always a number of occasions when we believe purely and simply upon the word of another. A man who would refuse to accept anything before he had *investigated* all the testimonies, or who would never assent to anything without studying the

evidence, would be unbearable. Just as we trust others, we expect them to trust us. Why is a lie so heinous and offensive even when it is neither grievously sinful nor harmful? Largely because it is a betrayal of trust. This is an evident sign that, at least in practical life, we frequently act on trust. Doubtless we must allow plenty of room for this implicit judgment, often almost unconscious, on the truth of a statement, and for the quick and tacit verification of testimony which in most cases precedes our adhesion. But an attentive observer, it seems, could not deny the fact that most men are constantly making acts of faith based solely upon the testimony of another, and that any investigation of the testimony, either before or after, has had no influence in determining these acts.

III

In describing the two kinds of faith and investigating the question of their existence, we have been able to see wherein they differ. Other features will be developed as we proceed. But, in order to get a clearer idea, it may not be out of place to make a comparison between the two kinds of faith and briefly outline the difference between them. Nothing perhaps could achieve this result better than a free translation of a few pages of Cardinal

Billot. Even if this were to entail some repetitions, the reader will be compensated by an increase of light on a point which, as we shall see later, is of capital importance for the theory of faith.[5] "There are two ways," he says, "of adhering with certitude to the testimony of another; there are two ways of believing: and, if the verb *believe* is used in both cases, it is only by way of *analogy*. The first way is an assent, *prompted by the evidence of the testimony:* I believe simply because it is evident to my mind that the witness could neither deceive nor be deceived. For instance, I perceive that such and such a thing has been certified to by Him who is Truth itself, or because, after an examination of all the circumstances attached to the testimony it is evident to me that no error or deception was present. This evidence, then, becomes not only a previous condition necessary to assent, but it is the very motive upon which the assent is based, the very reason which measures its firmness and certitude."

"An altogether different assent is given upon the testimony of another, not precisely and formally because of the manifest evidence of the true testimony, but *because the witness is worthy to be trusted. The mind of the hearer assents to the truth that the witness affirms, solely and precisely because he af-*

[5] See Latin text in Appendix B. The language of the author is of wonderful virility.

firms it. This manner of believing differs greatly from the one described before.

First difference. Though perfect and irresistible evidence may be present, nevertheless it is not the formal reason for the assent. I do not assent because it is evident to me that the thing has been certified to by truthful testimony so as to balance the degree of certitude with the degree of the evidence which I possess of the veracity of the witness.

Second difference. In the first case the knowledge and veracity of the witness would suffice, not so for the second kind of faith. For in order to have the evidence of the testimony, it is enough to see that the witness, in a determined case, has neither lied nor erred,—a fact which may happen once, even if it is not habitual with the witness. But here the motive for the assent is the moral authority of the witness, his right to a docile assent or even to the submission of the intellect, and this right does not belong to him who speaks the truth for once or for once has not erred, but to him alone who, on one line at least, possesses knowledge and veracity.

Third difference. The will must indeed intervene in faith whose motive is the evidence of testimony; but when this evidence is complete, the will is not free to refuse its interest.[6] In the case of a faith

[6] Card. Billot explains himself on this point in a passage which we have omitted because it is useless for our present purpose.

whose motive is the authority of the speaker, on the formal ground of an authority worthy of assent, the will is always free to demand this homage from the intellect. Consequently, the latter alone and not the former faith can be meritorious and be an homage of the believer to the witness.

Fourth difference. In the case of the latter faith, the degree of certitude is always measured by the authority attributed to the witness, no matter how perfect the evidence may be. Therefore, in believing on divine authority, I must believe with a most firm assent, even though my evidence for the divine infallibility and veracity is not sovereign, because I know that in every case the divine authority (if it intervenes) outweighs everything else.

Fifth and last difference. He who believes because of the evidence of the testimony, even though God is the witness, never believes for an uncreated motive; for the evidence of every statement proposed to our mind is always something created. On the contrary, he who believes on the authority of God, really posits a theological act, for his assent is based upon something which is God Himself; hence it appears how deeply true is the saying of St. Thomas that "the object of Christian Faith is the First Truth."

"It would be possible," Cardinal Billot concludes, "to point out some more differences. . . . But after what has been said we must hold this for certain:

Faith (even as opposed to *opinion*) is either *the assent which rests upon the evidence of the testimony,* as when, for instance, the historian believes a fact on account of an agreement among contemporary witnesses, or the assent which rests *upon the authority of the witness, formally on the ground of authority,* as when, for instance, the child accepts the authority of his mother, the ignorant the knowledge of the learned, or when in every-day life we believe what we have heard an honest man say, simply because we think him worthy to be trusted. Besides, it is not difficult to see that this second kind of assent verifies principally and in the first place the notion of faith, for it is either there or nowhere that one assents on trust."[7] This is the faith we owe to God, concludes Cardinal Billot, and his conclusion will also be ours. But perhaps we are getting ahead of our subject, for many explanations are necessary before we reach this point.

IV

Thus we conceive faith,—even purely human faith,—in two different ways: as an adhesion based upon the evidence of the testimony, or as an assent given upon the sole word of another, excluding, in

[7] The author here alludes to the relation between *fides* and *fidere*. (Cf. the French *foi* and *se fier*).

the act itself,[8] all consideration of the evidence, all control of the testimony. This twofold kind of faith is not a mere concept of the mind, but a fact of experience.

If we have taken up considerable space to establish this point, it was for a good purpose. For the distinction which we have noted is not only important in itself, but a weighty factor in the theory of faith. Those who have overlooked it have incurred obscurity and confusion. Once we admit this distinction, we are ready to answer clearly and precisely the question: To which of these two kinds does our faith, *i. e.* our supernatural, our Christian faith, belong? This question lies at the bottom of all theological disputes concerning Faith and the act of Faith. But it is often confused or mixed with other, altogether different questions and, as a consequence, hardly discernible to many seekers after truth. Whence comes the number of necessarily obscure solutions, of aimless sparrings? whence the difficulty for debaters to meet on definite ground? Our purpose is to grapple with the problem squarely and we hope to be able to give a satisfactory answer. A question well stated is half solved.

[8] Note the words: *"in the act itself,"* for nothing prevents us (and this is the case in all reasonable faith) from verifying first of all the trustworthiness of the witness, and having assured ourselves of the truth (and the true meaning) of the testimony.

CHAPTER IV

TWO THEOLOGICAL THEORIES

I

It is not an easy task to formulate an acceptable theory of faith, especially when we have to face the undeniable fact that Catholic theologians have two ways of conceiving and explaining faith, both reconcilable with dogma, but irreducible one to the other. These two theories correspond precisely to the two kinds of faith which we have described above.

The first school holds that Catholic Faith, like human faith, like all reasonable faith, is based upon the evidence of testimony. I "believe because I see that the divine testimony is true." The reason is that this faith is an intellectual and reasonable assent, and all intellectual and reasonable adhesion necessarily rests either upon direct evidence of the truth (immediate evidence as that of the first principles, or mediate evidence as in the case of mathematical deductions) or upon the evidence of truth contained in the word of another.[1]

[1] This proposition lies at the bottom of the system which is brilliantly developed by Cardinal de Lugo, and which has been

The other school holds that divine faith, as such, has nothing to do with evidence. Doubtless it *presupposes* a certain kind of evidence,—the evidence of *credibility*. For faith is not reasonable, nay, it is not even possible, before I have duly realized the fact that God is worthy of trust and that He has spoken. But these are only preliminary and necessary conditions. These judgments about the divine

accepted, in whole or in part, by theologians of the first rank, among others by Franzelin and Kleutgen, to mention only the deceased. Truly, Lugo, who is careful to distinguish the act of faith from logical assent of a similar type, given upon the motives of credibility (*What God says is true; now God says this; therefore this is true*), has devised a theory according to which we would have, in the syllogism of faith, an *immediate* and supernatural knowledge of the two premises (*What God says is true; now God says this*), as an intellectual seeing, in a special light of grace, both of the divine authority and of the fact of revelation. According to him, when the preliminary work which furnishes us with the motives of credibility has been done, the judgments of credibility, the terminus of this process, are as it were enveloped in a supernatural light, which transforms them to the extent that we continue to make them or renew them now under the direct influence of this light, wherein our intellect is bathed. Thus supernaturalized, they become capable of entering into the supernatural psychology of faith. This is an ingenious theory, and very specious, for it has captured the solid mind of the serious Franzelin. Since Kleutgen, however, this part of Lugo's system has been generally abandoned (see Stentrup, Hurter, Egger), and divine faith is assimilated in its whole procedure with scientific faith founded upon the evidence of testimony, avoiding, of course, those excesses of criticism condemned in Hermes, and leaving, as we shall see, a place to the will.

veracity and the fact of revelation lead me to the door of the sanctuary, but they do not make me enter; they have no logical influence upon the act of faith itself. I believe, not because I have seen that what I believe is true, but solely because God has said it.

To recur to the formulas mentioned above: The first school says, "I believe because I see that it is true," or, more explicitly, "I believe because I see that God has said it and that what God says is true." In the terms of the second school, "I believe because God has said it"; or, "God has said it, hence I believe." The former theory, therefore, *brings into the act of faith* the seeing, at least indirectly, of the truth, whereas the latter, while it *supposes* this seeing as a previous condition, abstracts from it in the acts itself. The former includes knowledge; the latter excludes it.[2]

[2] This notion of faith is, I believe, that of St. Thomas and it is at the bottom of the system commonly referred to as Suaresian, as also of the system of Cardinal Mazzella. But Suarez and Mazzella have mixed with it certain accessory elements, explanations of their own, which we can freely reject whilst retaining the fundamental idea. According to Suarez, there is an essential psychological difference between human faith and divine faith. He seems to conceive human faith as a scientific faith, the motive of which is the evidence of testimony; he conceives divine faith to be a faith of simple authority, based solely upon the authority of the testimony. But what part does this authority play in the act of faith, how does it act? It can not be as *seeing;* for in that case we should fall back into scientific faith, and there would no longer be

This statement reduces to its simplest form, and therefore expresses in the sharpest way, the opposition between the two theories. True, in practice the two systems are seldom so directly pitched one against the other and seldom reduce their teaching to such definite formulas; but it seems that these abstract formulas express the ultimate reason of the disagreement among theologians,—the irreducible elements which a close analysis discovers at the root of the two systems.

between human faith and divine faith the difference of formal object necessary for the specific differentiation of the acts; the act would no longer be proportioned to the sovereign authority of God, but to the knowledge we have of this authority. Still it must act and in such a manner that it determines and specifies our assent. It can not be in as much as *believed* itself in some fashion; not believed as material object of faith, nor by an act distinct from the act by which we adhere to the truth of faith; but in the same act and as formal object. How explain this faith in a formal object? In revealing a truth, says Suarez, God, in a way, reveals Himself, and I adhere by faith to the revealed truth only by adhering with the same faith to the authority that reveals itself in revealing the truth. But does not this explanation contradict the explanation of the master, making the authority who reveals and to whom I adhere by adhering to the revealed truth, a sort of material object of faith? In any case, what is this faith in authority and how does it explain itself? Here many find obscurities and inextricable embarrassments. In order to escape the difficulty, Mazzella has rejected all *belief* in the divine authority in faith, on the same ground on which he rejects all *seeing* of this authority. For him the intrinsic motive of faith is neither the authority, in so far as it is seeing, nor the authority in so far as it is believed. What then is it? While he

II

Are both theories equally Catholic? Are both equally compatible with the dogmatic notion of faith, and its essential properties? In other words do both explain equally well how it is that faith is a firm assent of the mind, having for its ultimate motive not the intrinsic truth of things seen in the natural light of reason, but the authority of the di-

appropriates a formula dear to St. Thomas, or rather applies to the formal object what St. Thomas often says of the principal material object (see Appendix D, n. 17 and 18), he holds that, in the act of faith, we adhere to the revealed truth *propter auctoritatem Dei* (or *Veritatem primam*) *non visam*. But this non-seeing of the authority is something purely negative: it may signify a condition of the assent of faith, but it could never explain the why nor be the formal object of it. St. Thomas, from whom the expression is borrowed, but who understands it in an altogether different sense, has nothing similar to the explanation of Mazzella. We must, then, distinguish, in Mazzella as well as in Suarez, the fundamental idea from the explanations which they give. Unfortunately, the distinction has not always been made and more than one writer has fought against the faith of simple authority and entirely rejected it, together with the systems of Suarez and Mazzella, although it might have made a good impression if it had been presented in its essential elements, without admixture of foreign ideas, which, though perhaps right in the mind of the authors, were presented in a more or less unattractive manner. There has been regrettable confusion concerning this, the main inconvenience of which has been to change the question and to some extent to falsify the data of the problem. For more details concerning these systems, see Mazzella, *De Virtutibus Infusis*, 3d edition, n. 773 ff.; Billot, *De Virtutibus Infusis*, th. 16, pp. 283 sq.

vine word;—an intellectual assent which is a real understanding and not a blind movement of the soul;—a reasonable assent, based upon certain motives of credibility;—a free assent, which is not the necessary effect of human reasoning;—a supernatural assent, in which grace intervenes as a necessary help for intellect and will? Finally, do both theories explain equally well how faith is a full homage of the mind and heart due by the creature to his Creator and freely rendered to God by created reason, which, with the help of grace, humbly yet reasonably accepts, with full assurance and knowledge, the infallible teachings of the uncreated Truth? These are the essential conditions of the act of faith, as laid down by the Church, especially in the third chapter of the admirable Constitution *Dei Filius*, promulgated by the Vatican Council.[3]

The answer to these questions is clear. The dogmatic data allow to both theories a certain amount of free play. Those who hold "science in faith" must be careful not to turn the act of faith into an act of science or into a mere conclusion drawn from rational premises. They must, to escape the anathema pronounced by the Council against Hermes, assign to grace and to free will a part in the very production and determination of the intellectual assent which, *as such, i. e., as an adhesion of the mind*, must be free and supernatural. They must main-

[3] See the text in Appendix C.

tain with the Church the essential distinction between the act of faith and the act of knowledge and show that in their theory reason in the final analysis depends upon the authority of God and not on its own light. This they undoubtedly have done. The ingenious and brilliant explanations of Lugo have satisfied such solid and sure minds as that of Franzelin. Even those who, like Kleutgen, though keeping the spirit of Lugo's system, found a few of its hypotheses too fragile, have admitted that there are temperaments that permit the essential properties of faith to subsist even where the workings of the mind are entirely scientific.

On the other hand those who advocate a faith only on authority, who exclude science from faith, must guard against a blind and instinctive fideism. They must show that, in their theory, faith is reasonable and truly intellectual, not only because it supposes the motives of credibility to have been perceived by reason, and justifying both the act of the will that commands the assent and the act of the intellect that obeys it; but because it gives to the mind a motive and an object of the intellectual order, a truth to know, as becomes a "cognoscible" faculty. Even those who, following Suarez, affirm most energetically that faith consists in believing, in nothing but believing, believing the revealed truth, believing in a certain way the authority that reveals; or those who, following Cardinal Mazzella,

claim that to believe is to adhere without seeing, under the command of the will: even they explain their theory in such a way as to safeguard the rights of reason and the intellectual nature of faith.

For the former school, the difficulty lies in showing how faith is not science, how faith is free and obscure, supernatural, leaning in the last analysis upon the sole authority of God. For the latter, it remains to be shown how faith is real, reasonable, and intellectual knowledge. But both schools reach their goal, and if one theory emphasises one aspect or one property of the dogma, and somewhat neglects its other aspects and properties, there is at least no absolute incompatibility. One can even understand how these different theories, looking at the facts from different angles, help us to get a more comprehensible and exact idea of the dogma. With Lugo alone, I could easily see how it is that faith is reasonable, but I could not so easily distinguish Faith from science, nor perhaps give to man's free will the place which must be assigned to it according to Holy Scripture and the Church Fathers. But my adversaries call my attention to this point. Lugo himself and his followers, realising the weak-spots in their theory from the objections raised against it, try to strengthen it, and, whether or not they succeed in overthrowing the objections, at least their strategy helps me to realise better which dogmatic position must be defended at all costs.

This remark is made for the benefit of those who see in these systems only brilliant but useless boasts or honest past-time for idlers. These theories have other advantages, but the one I have described is not altogether unimportant.[4]

And still it is a fact, one of these theories is right and the other is wrong. We all make the same act of faith, and if we fail to find in it the same elements, it is because one or the other has made a mistake in his analysis.[5] We must make our choice and answer the question placed before us when we distinguish the two kinds of faith, one founded on the evidence of testimony, the other on the testimony itself.

[4] It will never be known how much the disputes between Thomists and Molinists,—too lively sometimes, and regrettable for other reasons,—have fostered the progress of theological and philosophical thought. They sharpened many great minds, stimulated study and research, and led to a better understanding of St. Thomas and St. Augustine. It is thanks to these disputes that truths have been acquired which had been called into doubt or had been little noticed—the fact, for instance, that God knows the conditional future events, leaving aside the questions concerning Providence and free will, which have been more carefully studied and more correctly solved on both sides.

[5] We cannot say "the one and the other," because the two propositions to which we have reduced the question are contradictory: *Does science enter into the act of faith as its intrinsic motive?*, or: *Is the act of faith determined in any way by the view of the truth?* Some seem to believe that both schools could be right,—the act of faith being in the first instance psychologically a scientific act of faith, in the second case an act of faith on authority. I cannot see how this view is tenable, either psychologically or theologically.

CHAPTER V

THE TRUE CONCEPT OF CATHOLIC FAITH

I

To which kind does Christian Faith belong? We may answer unhesitatingly: "To the latter, namely, to the faith which is based entirely upon the word of God." Our faith is *reasonable* and may even be *reasoned out,* but in the act itself it is neither *reasoning* nor *critical.* We repeat: reason and criticism can and must, within certain limits, have their part in the act of Faith, but merely as preliminaries; their action ceases at the threshold of Faith to make room for the will, for grace, for supernatural light. Only historical or scientific faith reasons or criticises. It can be called faith only in a loose way, improperly speaking; it is a diminished faith, which no longer has all the characteristics of Faith. Science and Faith are opposed to each other in current usage, and to let science enter Faith is to abstract so much from the perfection and fullness of faith. History becomes a science only when it loses simple faith, which

accepts things purely on the testimony of another. It is the peculiar quality of faith to believe on the word of another.[6] "Teacher has said it, αὐτὸς ἔφα," the word of the pupil who desires only the authority of the master for a motive. "Mother said it," thus speaks the child who, without any investigation, without seeing anything, acquiesces uninquiringly in the words of his mother. Such is the true and pure notion of Faith. And it is only by analogy, so to speak, that the name Faith has been given to the reasoning faith of the historian, based not upon testimony, as such and in itself, but on the evidence, or upon the testimony in its relation to truth. Now in order to possess this divine Faith, we have to take Faith in its purest and most complete meaning. Did our Lord not make allusion to the pure and simple faith of those who close their eyes and open their ears whilst God is speaking, when He thanked His heavenly Father for having hidden His secrets from the wise and prudent in order to reveal them to the little ones? " Was it not for the same reason that He said: If you do not change and become like one of these little ones, you shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven? It is because of their humble abandonment and their simple faith that children are set up as models; and the Church Fathers, when interpreting these words of Christ,

[6] I do not speak of faith *in so far as it is reasonable*—that is another question;—but of faith *in so far as it is faith.*

carefully note that the characteristic feature of children is to believe what they are told: *Dictis credunt.*

II

Christian Faith has always been explained in that way. St. Thomas continually repeats that to believe is to adhere to the word of God, nothing more: *"simpliciter inhaerendo primae veritati";* [7] that the only argument faith needs is the authority of the divine word; that to believe is to surrender one's intellect to the authority of God, without giving it any rest or satisfaction in the evident view of the truth. Can anyone maintain that this does not clearly mean that to believe is to rely solely upon the word, without trying to find a motive of assent either in the intrinsic evidence of the truth,—which is science,—or in the evidence of the testimony,—which would be faith, but faith in an improper sense, or scientific faith? Again St. Thomas distinctly stated our question and distinguished the two kinds of faith which we have mentioned. He ascribes the first,—whose motive is the evidence of the testimony,—to the devil and to the heretics (he means formal heretics); and says it is only *analogical,* not the real Christian faith. And with his usual depth, he adds that the motive of the heretic,

[7] *S. Th.,* 2a 2ae, qu. 5, art. 3, ad 1; see Appendix D, *passim.*

even when he is in possession of the truth, is not, in its last analysis, the pure and simple acceptation of the divine authority, but his own will and judgment.[8]

Hence we understand the essential rôle which the will plays in faith, according to St. Thomas, the Fathers, and Holy Scripture. Does not common sense or reason alone suffice to lead me to believe a fact or a truth for which I do not possess direct evidence myself, either on the sole evidence of the testimony and the consideration of the motives? However, to make an act of faith exclusively on the word of another, without any other consideration, we need this instinctive natural credulity which God has given us, as He has endowed us with the love of goodness and the desire for truth; or we have to make an effort of good will captivating the intellect and subjecting it to laws which are not his own.

III

This is the reason why the act of faith is an homage, as it were a sacrifice, to God of our most intimate thoughts, our most cherished possession, namely, intellectual independence. To trust the word of another, verifying it and accepting it only to

[8] Cf. *De Verit.*, qu. 14, especially articles 1 and 2, and 2a 2ae, qu. 1–5; particularly qu. 5, art. 2 and 3. See Appendix D.

the extent to which common sense tells me that the testimony is true and that it would be absurd not to believe it, is not, properly speaking, an homage to this witness, at least not a voluntary homage. I do not defer to him, but to his reasons, or rather, to my own reason and will. It may be glorious for a scientist to force conviction even from his enemies; it may be worthy of Jesus Christ to give such evident signs of His divine mission that the demons are compelled to cry out: *"I know who Thou art, the Holy One of God.*[9] But the meritorious submission, the one which the master relishes, is the assent of the disciple given without inquiry or examination": αὐτὸς ἔφα, *ipse dixit.* There, and there only, we find the reverence which bows before superiority; this surrender of the mind itself and this confidence so complimentary to Him who is its object, so close to and so inseparably united with faith that both objects, like the words, constitute but one, so to speak. Hence the merit and the difficulty of faith. For to submit thus on the sole word of another, even though it be God, one must "disengage oneself from oneself"; reason must give up the delicate pleasure of penetrating and explaining its object, but still lend it a firm adhesion.

Indeed, to deny oneself is not to give up one's rights; such a self-denial—we shall come back to it

[9] Mark, I, 24.

later,—is entirely reasonable, glorious, and advantageous to the mind. Still it remains true that it is a severe trial for human pride, a real humiliation of the mind, analogous to immolation and sacrifice, which are the more deeply felt nowadays because man has grown jealous of his independence of mind and more attached to his personal opinions. Now this absolute surrender or self-denial of the mind, this bondage under strange laws, is less evident in the Faith that "sees" and bases its adhesion, at least in part, on the evidence of the truth and the data of reason.

IV

Besides, even though it safeguards the essential properties of theological faith, the theory of scientific faith is obliged to seek for explanations which look very much like expedients. For example: the *non-evidence* of the testimony plays a capital rôle in it. It admits, as every Catholic theory of Faith must admit, the necessity of a previous judgment of credibility, based on sure evidence of the fact of revelation. But according to this theory, this certitude must by no means arrive at *self-evidence.* For, faith being, to a certain extent at least, a conclusion from two previous judgments, the one based on divine authority (*what God says is true*), the other on the fact of revelation (*God*

has said, for instance, the Christ is the Godman), if the premises are evident, the conclusion will also be evident and consequently necessary. Then Faith would no longer be obscure and free.[10]

I admit that the rules of logic allow and the laws of psychology demand that we make this distinction between *evidence* and *certitude*.[11] There is such a thing as *perfect evidence,* which imposes itself upon the mind and produces a necessary conviction. I may, for a moment, forget the truth that *a whole is greater than any one of its parts,* but the instant I think of it, I am no longer free to deny or doubt it, or in any way to suspend my judgment. There are other truths which are certain, and which I have proved to myself by arguments which have satisfied my intellect: for example, that *the human soul is immortal;* yet I may think of this assertion without being in any way forced to assent; I may even doubt it (an imprudent doubt, but possible nevertheless) because on the one side *the reasons for* are of such a nature that, in order to see their worth, an intellectual effort is required; on the other hand, *the reasons against,* even though worthless, may present themselves with such force or under such a convincing appearance of truth that I may

[10] There is often a confusion between *extrinsic* and *mediate* evidence.

[11] Possibly the words are not happily chosen, but suggest inexact ideas to some. It may be better to say: *perfect evidence* and *imperfect evidence,* or something to that effect.

stop and consider the objection under its specious aspect; and since, at the same time, I do not make the necessary effort to recall the reasons which had proven the truth to me before, and of which I was certain, or recall the emptiness of the objection, my mind may be disturbed in the peaceful possession of the truth. I may *doubt,* though I had till then a real and legitimate certitude. Far be it from us to attack the distinction between *evidence* and *certitude;* but we do question the *essential* rôle assigned to this distinction in the explanation of Faith.

Does Faith rest upon a condition which is accidental and accessory and nothing else besides a little more or less clearness in the evidence of the motives? Must we then deny either that the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Apostles had full evidence that Jesus Christ spoke the truth, or say that they never had faith,—we mean, of course, free and meritorious faith,—when the testimony had the clearness of evidence? Are not the two hypotheses equally absurd? Did not the Blessed Virgin have full evidence that the Angel Gabriel spoke in the name of God? How then could there have been any possibility of doubt? And yet Mary in this case had Faith: *"Beata es, quae credidisti. . . . Blessed art thou that hast believed,"* said her cousin Elizabeth. The context shows that there was question of Faith in God based upon the word of the

Angel. Is it not strange, then, that faith resting entirely upon authority,—and even, according to the followers of De Lugo, upon the evidence of authority,—that when this authority grows stronger and more evident, faith becomes impossible? I know that a very strong light blinds my weak eyes; but this cannot be the case here. Nor can it be said that theologians admit something like it for the material object of faith. They say that Faith is possible even in a truth known by reason (the existence of God, for instance, or the immortality of the soul), provided that this truth does not impose itself with such irresistible clearness that it leaves no room for the motive of Faith; for no one holds that I can make an act of faith in a person who would ask me to believe that the sun is shining brightly, when I actually feel the oppressing heat of midday. But this is not at all our case. To believe means to adhere without seeing the object, hence the vision of the object may impose itself and render faith impossible. But since to believe means to adhere upon the word and authority of another, how could a clearer insight into this authority, either into the fact of the testimony or into the knowledge of its veracity, be an obstacle to Faith, especially for those who believe that the very "seeing" of this authority and testimony is at least a partial motive of Faith?

V

One sees how difficult is this position. But there is another answer,—the only answer, according to Hurtado and a few others. There is always room, they say, for liberty and obscurity in Faith. The adhesion,—though perhaps determined in certain cases by the motives of credibility,—is not given according to the measure of these motives; grace and the will intervene, and under their command the assent of the mind becomes firmer than the sole perception of these motives could have effected. This assent is proportioned to the weight of the authority, not as it appears to me, but as it is in itself, infinitely worthy of faith. From then on this assent is free and obscure.

It is an established fact which no Catholic can deny, that the will can command the intellect to adhere in a measure which surpasses in firmness the weight of the motives.[12] Is not this excess of adhesion over the motives, as we understand it, entirely *accidental,* and does it sufficiently explain two *essential* properties of the act of Faith, its freedom and its obscurity? Once you have admitted a

[12] The following proposition was condemned by Innocent XI, March 2, 1679: *"Voluntas non potest efficere, ut assensus fidei in seipso sit magis firmus, quam mereatur pondus rationum ad id impellentium."* Denziger, *Enchiridon,* n. 1036. When I say *the motives,* I mean the motives of credibility, and not the proper or intrinsic motive of faith.

disproportion between the adhesion and the evidence of the motives, why not go farther and admit that there may be, under the command of the will, an adhesion of the mind independent of all *logical influence* of the motives and the *perception* of the truth? But to admit this is to give up the theory of *discursive* Faith. It would mean that Christian Faith is a Faith *without discourse,* a simple and immediate adhesion of the mind to revealed truth, *supposing* the perception of the motives which make the fact of revelation certain, but *motived* solely by the divine authority, without any logical *influence* of the previous perception upon the assent. It would be to come back to the child's formula: "I believe because mother said it."

There is not as much disagreement among theologians as one would be inclined to think. The various systems are related to one of the two theories just explained; but the question has never been stated so simply: Is Christian Faith *discursive* Faith? Has the assent of Faith for its intellectual motive the evidence of the testimony, *i. e.,* the perception of the truth in the word of God? Nearly always the battle has been fought on a different field. Lugo and his followers,—if one may judge from their arguments,—found their incentive in upholding the theory of scientific faith in the fact that it is difficult to see how Faith on simple authority could be reasonable and really intellectual. Or,

perhaps, Faith on simple authority was presented to them embarrassed with apparently inadmissible accessories so that they did not know how to distinguish between the essentials. May we not hope that they will be less hostile to this theory when they see it expounded without those accessories, and see it explained how, in the first place, one can have a reasonable and intellectual faith and still adhere to this theory, and, secondly, how one can hold this theory, yet need not necessarily adopt the system of Suarez.

CHAPTER VI

THE MOTIVE OF FAITH

In our analysis of the notion of Faith we implicitly treated of its motive. We must develop this point a little more if we wish to gain an exact and a complete idea of faith. This is all the more necessary since the divergencies of opinion among theologians, though attributable to their different views of the notion of faith, really concern mostly the motive of Faith and the rôle it plays in the act of Faith.

I

Before going any farther we must agree on the meaning of the terms to be used. When we speak of the motive of Faith we do not mean the motives of credibility which prepare the intellect by leading it to accept the fact of revelation and the credibility of its mysteries. Nor do we mean those motives which may influence the will and cause it to say, "I will believe," without which there could be no faith. We mean the proper and intrinsic mo-

tive of Faith, not any extrinsic motives; we mean the motive in the order of Faith, in the act of Faith itself; that motive which I mention when I say: "My God, I believe this truth because Thou, who art the Truth, hast revealed it."

By the *proper motive* (the theologians often say, *formal object*) of our acts, we generally mean two things. First, the manner in which a faculty attains its object, the light by which it sees this object, the *formal reason* under which it seizes upon the object. Thus, for instance, the eye receives everything under the aspect of color, the will under the aspect of goodness, reason under the aspect of truth. This is what we have in mind when we speak of the *formal object*, because this notion is taken from the object that terminates the act. But it is also that through which the object acts upon my faculty to make the latter produce its act. It is in so far as it is colored that the object makes an impression on my eye and determines my vision; it is in so far as the object is good that it moves my will; and it is in so far as the object is true that it sets my intellect working. From this point of view the formal object presents itself chiefly as a *"causa motrix,"* as the very determinant of my action.[1]

[1] For us here "motive" and "formal object" are one and the same thing. If they must be distinguished by other schools, it can make no difference to us.

When we say, therefore, that the authority of God is the motive of faith, we mean that we adhere to the revealed truth in so far as it is guaranteed by the infallible authority of God, and that we adhere to it under the influence of that authority. Thus God's authority plays both an objective and a causal rôle in the act of Faith, and in this respect one can compare the assent of Faith to any other intellectual assent. But since Faith,—to use an expression of St. Thomas which we will explain later,—is an act of the intellect in so far as it is influenced by the will, the motive, in faith, has a special way of acting, and dividing, so to speak, its double rôle of action between the two faculties which contribute to the making of the act: and in this respect the assent of Faith is distinguished from every other firm assent. The question at issue is subtle and requires further explanation. We will, therefore, first treat of the objective rôle. What is meant when we say that divine authority is the formal object of Faith or the objective reason for our assent to revealed truth?

II

To say that divine authority is the motive of faith and the formal object of our assent, is to speak in abstractions. This way of speaking exposes us to the danger of taking abstractions for realities,

We might, *e. g.*, present authority as a distinct object, or term of the assent of Faith, just as revealed truth, or turn it into a material object, such as is present and assented to in any act of faith. To understand things clearly we must take them in the order of concrete realities. A truth is proposed to me "as having been uttered by God," and my intellect, under the influence of the will, adheres to this truth *as uttered by God.* There are not then two objects: revealed truth and divine authority; there is but one object, one truth, therefore, but one total object, the material object, but clothed with an objective property, through which the spoken truth becomes for the intellect an *object of faith,* worthy of the assent of faith. It is to this truth, thus concretely presented, that I assent. So it is in sense perception. I do not properly perceive *both* the object *and* the color, but I perceive the tree under the aspect of color; my eyes become aware of the tree because of its color, and again, for that same reason, the tree becomes the term of my seeing; for color is not, properly speaking, the term of my seeing,—if it were, I should make of color a material object;—what I see is this concrete whole, this colored object.[2]

The same rule applies to evident intellectual knowledge. This is more easily illustrated, for it is

[2] Recall the well-known formula: *"Oculus non videt proprie colorem, sed coloratum."*

easy to think of color as a distinct object of perception. The evidence which is the motive of my assent, is nothing but the truth itself which I affirm. Once I have an idea of what is meant by the words *whole* and *part* and understand the meaning of the phrase *"to be more or less great,"* I affirm in *the light of the evidence* that the *whole is greater than any of its parts.* I do not affirm the *evidence,* but I affirm the agreement between subject and predicate, and consequently I may, by a sort of reflexion, affirm this agreement as evident.

In the case of Faith I do not affirm that abstract thing which is authority, but I affirm the agreement between the two terms "God became man," not under the influence of the *evidence,* but moved by *divine authority.*[3]

Finally,—I insist upon this point because it is essential for the exact notion of the motive of faith,—when, under the influence of these principles, (that *every spiritual being is immortal* and that *the human soul is spiritual*) I affirm with full assurance that *the human soul is immortal,* the premises are the motive for my conclusion, still I do not affirm the premises in my conclusion; they have been previously affirmed, but their influence continues to make itself felt on my intellect, and it is as it were

[3] We shall see later that the *authority* does not act upon the intellect as does the *evidence;* our aim here is to understand the meaning of the proposition: *authority is motive of faith.*

in their light that I see the conclusion. They remain present not as a distinct object, but as enveloping in their light the terms *human soul* and *immortal*. Thus in the act of faith I had to decide that such or such a truth (*e. g.*, "God became man") had been uttered by the God of truth and that this God asks me to believe it. But once I have done this, when under this influence I adhere to the revealed truth, authority is no longer a distinct term of adhesion, but only a motive, really intrinsic in the act; for the revealed assertion presents itself to me clothed with divine authority, and it is under this formal aspect of its having been uttered by God that I give my assent to it.[4]

It is evident that the intellect really has its object in faith. Its material object is the revealed truth; its formal object and the objective reason for affirming the truth to which I adhere, is the divine authority which guarantees the revealed truth, which informs it, so to speak, and is one with it. I

[4] Cardinal Billot clearly sums up the idea. After having said that the divine authority is reached (*attingitur*) both before the act of Faith (thanks to the motives of credibility which make *known to us that God has spoken*) and in the act of Faith itself, he adds: *"aliter tamen et aliter. Ante actum fidei attingitur absolute ut res* (as material object) . . . *In ipso autem actu fidei attingitur pure ut ratio credendi; hoc est, non ut quod creditur* [a little farther down he says: *neque ut quod scitur*], *sed ut propter quod aliquid creditur, et seipsa firmat assensum credentis."* (*De Eccles.*, p. 46; 1903 edition, p. 44; cf. *De Virtutibus Infusis*, th. 16, p. 281).

adhere to the revealed truth because it is truth, not because it is *evident* or *probable,* but because it is *believable*. When I believe that God became man, it is a truth that I affirm, and for that truth I am ready to die.

III

Thus we see how the divine authority is the formal object of Faith, and how this authority may be present to the mind and play an objective rôle without being in any way the material term or a distinct object in the assent itself. This is not peculiar to Faith. But, as we said above, the motive must also play a causal rôle. What is this causal rôle of the motive in faith?

It is not a logical causality, and thereby the assent of faith differs from other firm assents. In science,—immediate judgment or syllogistic conclusion,—the intellectual adhesion is determined by the perception of the truth. In faith it is necessarily quite different. The intellect of itself is drawn only by evident truth, and we know that the divine authority does not make the truth which it guarantees evident. Hence the fact that a revealed statement is true, does not move the intellect, since the guarantee of divine authority does not make it evident, until it becomes evident to me; my intellect, left to itself, remains inert in the face of this statement:

"God was made man for us." Whence will the impulse come? From the will. Whence the firm adhesion? From the will. When I think of the causal rôle of authority in Faith, I must not think of a *logical* action of authority on the intellect. The movement by which the intellect tends towards its object does not proceed from the object itself attracting or determining my intellect, but it proceeds from the will; the assent of Faith is essentially an assent of the mind moved by the will. It is in the will, then, not in the object, that we must look for the principle of the movement, the force that moves the intellect to assent in questions of Faith.

But, it will be objected, if this formal object, divine authority, is not really the motive and has no influence upon the intellect, what becomes of its causal rôle? It keeps its causal rôle and remains a real motive. But the influence of this motive is felt by the intellect only through the intervention of the will. To see in faith nothing but the intellectual act itself, isolated as it were, would make one say that the divine authority, properly speaking, has no part in Faith at all, or is extrinsic to it. Such a view of Faith would be incomplete, not to say incorrect. The act of Faith is an act of the intellect (*elicitive ab intellectu*), but it is commanded by the will (*imperative a voluntate*), and this second characteristic is quite essential. Hence the intrinsic motive which determines the will to

command this act is, in itself, also a proper motive, intrinsic to the act. Let it be well understood, however, that we do not assert that the act of Faith is, properly speaking, *made up* of two acts. No, it is but one act, and this an intellectual act; but essentially an act of the intellect in so far as the latter is moved by the will.[5]

But is there no intellectual motive in Faith? To assert this would be inexact; for *motive* means *formal object,* or the *formal reason* through which a faculty reaches its material object, and we have seen that in Faith the intellect really has its object, its formal objective reason, an aspect of truth. If we take motive exclusively in the causal sense, we must still say that the divine authority is really the motive for the act by which the intellect assents in Faith. Even though divine authority exercises no *logical causality, i. e.,* no causality which is inconsistent with the act of Faith, it is nevertheless the cause of the assent given.

Furthermore, this causality is not entirely extrinsic,—I not only say to the act of Faith, for I have shown that causality is essential to it, and, in a true sense, intrinsic,—but also to the intellectual act itself. In so far as the authority is seen by my

[5] St. Thomas continually insists on this, *e. g., S. Th.,* 2a 2ae, qu. 2, art. 1, ad. 3 and art. 2; qu. 4, art. 1 sq. The correct notion of Faith will always be missed if the essential rôle of the will is forgotten. See the texts in Appendix D, *passim.*

intellect and guarantees the statement which is proposed to my belief it acts on the will and impels it freely to command the act of Faith. Besides, the intellect, upon the command of the will, *clings* to authority as a formal object of the assent when it adheres to the statement now perceived as believable. In authority also does the intellect find the proper principle of its rest and of its certitude in acquiescing in divine truth.

In a word, my intellect perceives revealed truth as worthy of assent of unconditioned faith, only in so far as that truth has been presented to the mind by two previous judgments as emanating from God and guaranteed by divine authority; and it is to this truth, present to the mind and guaranteed by the infallible authority of God, that my mind, under the command of the will, adheres. This command was necessary, not because the mind lacked an object or a reason for its assent, but because this object, in Faith, presents itself to the intellect under such conditions that the mind cannot by its own energy alone adhere to it; all that the intellect can do is to ask the will for the needed impulse and then, applied by the will to the object, of itself adhere, while the will keeps the mind applied to its object. Hence the divine authority is the motive of Faith both as the formal term of the act considered as *elicited* by the intellect, and as the very principle

of the impulse which produces the act, considered as a *commanded* act.

Thus it is clear that the divine authority influences the assent in much the same manner as the principle acts in a scientific conclusion. It gives to the mind both the formal reason for its assent and the energy on account of which this assent is given. But here the similarity ends. The process of Faith is not a logical process like that of science. Faith and science are two distinct ways of arriving at knowledge: and their *psychology* is essentially different.[6]

IV

In close connection with this theory of the motive are two essential properties of Faith, namely, liberty and obscurity. We saw how the followers of the theory of scientific Faith (*i. e.*, Faith based upon the evidence of testimony) find it difficult to account for these properties. For us the thing is very simple. Divine authority guarantees revealed truth, but it does not make that truth evident. I may know, and know with full evidence, that God has revealed the mystery of the Incarnation; this truth, "God became man," nevertheless remains obscure

[6] How faith works psychologically will be treated in the second part of this book.

for me. My intellect can not adhere to it by itself; for it is determined to assent only by the evidence of the truth. Some extrinsic impulse is needed, and this can come only from the will. Hence the will intervenes in the act of Faith as a necessary and essential agent. And since the will is free, the assent given under its influence, too, is free.

This is so, we insist, no matter what evidence I may possess of my motives for believing. For these motives, however evident they may be, are never the proper motive of faith. They may lead me to say, and to say with necessity, that I may believe, or that I must believe, or that it is absurd and criminal not to believe; but never will they be able to make me say, "I believe." The proper motive is the authority of God (*"I believe because God said it"*), and this motive does not *show* the truth, and the assent given under the sole influence of this motive will always be an obscure, and consequently a free, assent. Faith does not see the truth which it affirms.[7]

Could this possibly be the idea of some theologians when they put down as a principle that the motive of Faith must always be obscure? If this were so, they should speak somewhat more clearly than they do. For they say,—Mazzella, for instance,—since

[7] I do not propose to settle the controversy whether this truth may be known from other sources.

both Faith and its object are obscure, I must necessarily adhere to the divine authority in the dark, and a clear perception of this authority would render the act of Faith impossible. That the act of faith is impossible for him who has an intuitive vision of God is evident; but not for the reason which these writers give. In any case, while we are on this earth, why should a clearer perception of the fact that a truth comes from God and is guaranteed by His authority, be an obstacle to Faith? In order to believe, I must know that I ought to believe, and that a given statement imposes itself upon my Faith as uttered by God? Why, if this is evident, should it be impossible for me to believe? And then it is meaningless to speak of obscurity of the motive or obscurity of the divine authority in Faith. There is a confusion in the very statement of the question which we thought it useful to point out.

Such is, as far as we have been able to outline it, the idea of faith, such is the theory which seems to us the best explanation of our dogma. How is the act of Faith made? How can the act of Faith be called true knowledge? How can it be reasonable without being an act of the reasoning power? What are the respective parts played by grace and the will? How do we proceed from previous judgments to the judgment of Faith, and what connection is there between these two orders of knowledge?

The reader has already been able to anticipate the answer to these questions in the explanations given in the first part of our work. But they must be treated separately and more fully.

For the moment let us be satisfied with having disentangled the true nature of Faith. To believe is to know and to affirm a truth, not because we see it in itself,—that would be *science;*—not because we see the truth of it in the word of God,—that would be *scientific faith;*—but simply and solely *because God has said it,* simply and exclusively upon the authority of the divine word. "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught," Christ said one day to the fisherman, Simon. And "Simon answering said to him: Master, we have labored all the night, and have taken nothing: but at thy word I will let down the net." This is what Faith does. *At the word of God,* the will launches the intellect; and at the moment when human efforts would prove vain, the divine word secures for the mind the capture of truth hidden in the depths of the Divine Essence.

PART II

THE ACT OF FAITH

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

To give an exact definition of Faith is, as we have seen, a somewhat difficult problem. To analyze the act of Faith, to see exactly how it is made, to bring out clearly the part played by preliminary knowledge, by the intellect, by the will, and by grace, and to show how seemingly incompatible conditions are reconciled in this act, is still more difficult. If faith were nothing but a sentiment, a sort of religious instinct which makes us say, "I believe," just as we say, "I love," the explanation would be relatively simple and easy, and the problem of Faith would not differ from other psychological problems concerning the nature and the play of our sentiments. Simple and easy also if Faith were, as Hermes claims it to be, merely the necessary and scientific conclusion of a syllogism. Simple and easy also,—or at least without any special difficulty,—if Faith, though it does not see its object directly, would be an assent given upon the perception of its motive, based upon the evidence of testimony. All we should then have to do would

be to refer it to historical and scientific Faith, the nature of which is easily explained. But the act of supernatural Faith is neither an instinctive impulse nor a logical conclusion; and we believe those are mistaken who see in it a scientific act. We are dealing here with an intellectual and perfectly reasonable act which has nothing to do with science; we are dealing with a real knowledge which is based neither upon the perception of the object nor upon that of the testimony; we are dealing with a real certitude which depends not upon evidence, but upon the will. This truth, of course, is not readily understood. We must add that this act is supernatural, which circumstance, if it does not, as some would have it, essentially modify its nature and tendency, does at least introduce into it conditions of which we must take account. If the analysis of a scientific act or of an act of love presents great difficulties to the psychologist, we must expect to meet even greater difficulties in analyzing so complicated an act as that of Faith. It is not at all surprising that more than one writer who has tried to give an explanation of it should have forgotten some essential element, or brought out only one or two properties, or dealt only with the apparent antinomies. But we, who are depending on dogmatic data to light up our way and to rid us, as St. Jerome would say, of the "liberty of error,"—we may (not indeed take the act and present it in

its living concrete reality, nor even take it apart and show its mechanism in detail), but we may explain its action and movements taken as a whole, sufficiently at least to see how seemingly irreconcilable properties are therein reconciled, or to get an idea, if not a glimpse, of the beauty of this act in its psychological and supernatural reality and in its moral being, since in it the natural and the supernatural meet and embrace. In this act man, listening with respect, adoration, and absolute submission to God, who speaks from the cloud, freely accepts, under the divine prompting and light, the hand which God extends to him. In this act are formed in darkness between the Creator and His creatures intellectual and moral relations which lead man, if he is faithful, to the splendors of the beatific vision; in it the invisible possessions, nay the very secrets of God are opened to us ; in it, finally, there begins for us that ineffable though still imperfect union of mind and will with God,—that divine life which we are destined to live eternally in Heaven, seeing Him face to face as He knows Himself, and loving Him as He loves Himself, transformed into Him by knowledge and love, deified without giving up our own personality, one with Him in a communion which respects and preserves the essential difference and infinite distance between "Him who is" and "him who it not."

CHAPTER II

THE PRELIMINARY CERTITUDES

I

We cannot understand anything at all of the act of Faith unless we distinguish with great care the preparations for the act and the act itself. In the former, everything is, or may be, scientific or reasoned; everything is, or may be, natural and human; everything is, or may be, speculative study, without any other intervention of the will than a thirst for knowledge, love for truth, and earnestness in its pursuit. In the latter the will has its essential part, and so has grace, and the intellect no longer seeks and disputes, but adheres, without further examination, to the revealed truth.

The act of Faith, being an adhesion of the intellect to truth, based upon the word of God, necessarily implies the notions of revelation and divine veracity. In other words, the motive of Faith being the authority of the divine testimony, I must, in order to believe, be sure that God has spoken and that He has spoken the truth. That God requires belief in His word when He speaks,

goes without saying. But it is not so easy to make sure that He has spoken. This, however, is a necessary starting-point for the act of Faith. The Faith of the Christian believer is reasonable, infallible, irrevocable. It therefore presupposes certitude regarding the fact of revelation.[1] The Church her-

[1] What is said of Faith and revelation, holds good for the true Church and the certitude of her truth. But let it be well understood, certitude does not mean the solution of all doubts, perfect clearness on all points, and still less a dazzling evidence. Negatively, the light is complete for those *who are called:* a pagan sees clearly that his religion is false, an Anglican, that his position is untenable. The particular point wherein falsity shines is different according to the minds, the circumstances, the movements of grace: for a pagan it ordinarily is the *unreasonableness* of idolatry; for Newman it was the *separation from Catholic unity* (analogy between the Anglicans and the Donatists); for Manning it was the lack of an *infallible authority,* which he knew was necessary; for many whom I have questioned, it has been the *practical necessity* of choosing between Catholicism and Agnosticism. Positively, the clearness is, ordinarily, less full. Upon the principal fact,—the one on which all the rest hinge, namely, the divine mission of Christ, the truth of the Catholic Church,—God gives to the chosen soul light, at times dazzling, but always sufficient for a *prudent* and *necessary* progress in conscience. This he does not do for all pagans, nor for all heretics. For the rest, the ideas remain generally confused, the objections accumulate,—and to wait for the dissipation of all doubts is practically to renounce the truth. God wills that we give ourselves to Him. Without this practical confidence, we shall always remain in doubt . . . or the light will grow dim and finally become extinguished. A certain convert has expressed this perfectly. "One imagines," he says, "that it is necessary to have dissipated all doubts before taking the last step; on the contrary, one must *make the plunge* in order to see everything and understand every-

self has often affirmed the necessity of this certitude. To give but one instance, she has condemned the proposition that "The assent of a faith that is supernatural and useful for salvation is compatible with a purely probable knowledge of revelation, nay, even with the fear that God has not spoken." [2] Consequently there is no divine faith without previous certitude regarding the fact of revelation.[3]

II

To expatiate on the nature of this certitude and on the manner of reaching it, is outside the scope

thing. It is thus that God repays our faith and our simplicity." (*How I Joined the Fold,* by Lady Herbert of Lea; in *Le Sillon,* 10 March, 1898, p. 204.) But this does not entail any insufficiency of motive.

[2] Propositions condemned by Innocent XI, on March 2, 1679, prop. 21. Cf. Denziger, *Enchiridion,* n. 1038.

[3] It may be useful to note that *revelation* here does not necessarily mean the Christian revelation, nor the Mosaic, nor even that given to the Patriarchs. If, *e. g.,* God, either Himself, or by the intermediary of an angel, gives light to a pagan of good will, it is probably concerning God the Redeemer; but it is not necessary to pass by the means of Christian revelation. It is enough that God gives to this pagan, either personally (as in the case of the prophets), or by an angel, the necessary truths (*"Oportet accedentem ad Deum credere quia est et quia . . . remunerator est*) and that the pagan believes in God. Now God has his own ways of revealing Himself (we are acquainted with three kinds of prophetic revelation). He may probably also, in certain cases, subjectively enlighten the mind to help it to choose the vestiges of truth in the pagan traditions and find the certitude which at times they may contain.

of this book.[4] But a few remarks will not be out of place here to dissipate some obscurities.

Certitude is the resting of the intellect in the possession of truth. There are degrees of certitude, not in the exclusion of doubt,—for all certitude is equally incompatible with *actual* doubt,—but in the positive adhesion to truth. There is a certitude founded upon evidence so convincing as to render all doubt impossible. There is a certitude which, excluding prudent and motived doubt, does not satisfy the intellect by such irresistible evidence of truth that no doubt whatever remains. As we have already mentioned this point, it will be unnecessary to insist on it any further. But one can easily see that the certitude given by revelation is of the second category, at least in ordinary circumstances. Even those who have strictly scientific and well founded certitude of revelation, *can* still doubt.

III

If we look at the motive of certitude, we shall see that *one person* may have certitude because of motives which would not give perfect peace of mind to *another*. A child confidently relies on the word

[4] Cf. Le Bachelet, S. S., *De l'Apologétique Traditionelle et de l'Apologétique Moderne,* IX, where there is to be found a masterly treatment of the question of the manifold preparation of men for the faith.

of his mother, but this same word may be doubted by another. This certitude, founded either upon motives which can not satisfy all intellects, or (which in practice is nearly the same thing) upon motives good in themselves and valid for all, but grasped imperfectly and in a light which would not be strong enough for all, is called *relative certitude*. It is *certitude* because it gives full peace to the intellect, and, barring error possible in this case, yet *accidental*,[5] *relative* or *respective* certitude because its motive has weight only for certain minds. It is direct and practical rather than speculative and reflected certitude. Indeed, it can justify itself; and the poor ignorant woman who believes in the Gospel on the word of her pastor, if she has but relative certitude, ought to repel all doubts and reassure herself by saying that her pastor knows more than she does; that others believe as she does, and that, in any case, having no other means to arrive at certitude, she must rely on him whom Providence has ordained for her salvation.[6] It is true enough

[5] The motive of relative certitude, not always being sufficient *in fact*, may, indeed, leave room for error. It would be invincible error, if no prudent motives for doubting were present. But this error is not in the nature of things, although it may occur frequently enough. It is not natural, for instance, that a mother should deceive her child. This is the sense in which we use the term *accidental*.

[6] A Catholic, in a Catholic country, may easily acquire motives capable of producing absolute certitude. The poor woman whom we speak of in the text knows very well that her pastor

that in Protestant or schismatic countries such a person might remain in error with all such reasoning. But her error being invincible, she is not responsible for it. She has, besides, the required certitude on the fact of revelation, and, with the exception of details, unimportant in her case, she hears the true doctrine of the Gospel and is told to practice its true moral law. She can make an act of Faith in all the really revealed dogmas. As for those who live in pagan countries and do not possess even the necessary fundamental knowledge, God will come to their aid if they do their share, even though it required a miracle to make possible the act of faith which would save them. Moreover, the simpler the intellect, the easier is certitude. In every case God is there to dispel with His grace all unsolvable difficulties and to help to dispel all doubts. For an act of faith we must be certain, then, that God does not deceive, but we must also have certitude that He has spoken. But relative certitude, in the sense we have explained, is sufficient.

and his parish are in communion of doctrine with the other pastors and parishes of the diocese, the pastors with the bishop, the diocese with Rome, with the Church spread throughout the world, with the Church of the missionaries and the apostles, with the Church that has always flourished in spite of persecutions, etc. Thus she has motives of absolute certitude.

CHAPTER III

HOW WE ARRIVE AT PREVIOUS CERTITUDE

How do we arrive at this certitude?

The ways are innumerable, but chiefly three: The ways of God, the ways of the strong intellects, and those of the simple.

I

The ways of God are the miraculous ways, as, for instance, the revelation of Christ to St. Paul on the way to Damascus. Whether such facts are frequent, we do not know; but it is certain that the ordinary way is by the preaching of the Gospel; and even when Providence intervenes in an extraordinary way, it is very often in order to place the soul in communication with a human instructor. Thus, for instance, the centurion Cornelius was sent to St. Peter and the deacon Philip was ordered by the Holy Ghost to preach to the steward of the Queen of Ethiopia.

II

The ways of the strong intellects are study and science. We know that the Catholic religion is

susceptible of a strictly scientific demonstration. Science leads to the fact of revelation. This fact having been proved, Faith, even in mysteries, becomes obligatory; for reason tells us that an infallible witness deserves to be believed, and that a master who has a right to command must be obeyed when he commands. Such are the ways followed by our apologists, when they proceed by divers paths to show that Christianity, or, what is the same thing, the Catholic Church, has in its favor facts which can not be explained by natural causes and in view of which the man of good sense and good faith is obliged to say; "The finger of God is here." Truly, these ways are more often frequented by the faithful than by the unbelievers who pass, and stop for a moment to discover where they are; some take a few steps forward, but few go on to the luminous summit where the truth flashes them in the face and makes them cry out, as the restless, doubting mariner: "Land, land!" These ways are safe, but to tread them with a courage and good will that is not undermined by the perspective of sacrifice, requires a healthy mind, a soul free from prejudice, a passionate love for truth,—qualities which are rarely found together, least of all when there is question of religious truth. God alone knows how far those who do not arrive at the goal are responsible for their failure. But, surely, those who fail are poorly qualified to assert that Christianity

is not critical, scientific, reasonable. It is because they have not gone to the end of their reason that they remain half-way; with more criticism and science they might have arrived. But still most commonly it is not by the great highways of science and apologetics that men arrive at faith, nor even,—for this is exactly our question,—at a previous certitude of the fact of revelation.

The ways of the simple are more frequented, for even the learned and the philosophers prefer to take them.

III

The ways of the simple, like those of miracle and of science, are manifold. But they all have a common aspect in that they lead to the fact of revelation by human faith. It was on the word of a mother, a Christian teacher, a catechist, a priest, that we became acquainted with the coming of Jesus Christ, His life, miracles, and doctrine. We believed what they told us about Him as we believed what they told us about Caesar, Alexander, and St. Louis. And this human faith, though fallible, sufficed. We were told: "God said this; God can neither deceive nor be deceived," and we took their word with full assurance, and upon this assurance, with the help of grace, we rendered to God, who deigned to ask us for it, the homage of an unshakable Faith in the infallible word of eternal Truth.

Thus human testimony, sufficiently guaranteed, gave us the same reasonable certitude which the study and the science of the motives of credibility give, and hence faith became possible.

The pagan, who listens to the missionary,—except where the missionary performs miracles, has no other means than human authority. He may test this authority, demand an account of its claims; he may refuse to believe except knowingly and with scientific faith; but he can not touch the miracle by himself, he does not see the seal of God upon the word of the missionary: he must accept the fact of revelation on human Faith. I even believe that, when an unbeliever is converted among us, he ordinarily does not behold "the *divine*" directly upon the brow of the Church; I mean, that he does not perceive it consciously and with reflection as *divine*. He generally takes the way of the simple. The words of Augustine Thierry to Father Gratry convey a general truth: "I am a tired rationalist, who submits to the authority of the Church. I see the facts. I see from history the manifest necessity of a divine and visible authority for the development of the human race. But all that is outside of Christianity is of no account. Furthermore, everything that is outside the Catholic Church is without authority. All the sects are but forgetfulness, contempt, negation of history. Therefore, the Catholic Church is the authority I seek, and I submit myself to her.

I believe what she teaches me. I accept her *Credo.*" [1] It is only indirectly that the great historian had caught "the divine." This detour was not even necessary. The Church imposes herself as a great authority,—either divine or human, it does not matter here,—which it seems prudent to trust. Under her leadership one is sure to reach revelation, and through revelation, faith. What Thierry did as a historian, the philosopher may do as a philosopher. He may, for instance, verify the practical necessity of an authority to give to mankind religious truth and morality. This providential authority is none other than the Catholic Church. Hence, he may prudently submit himself to this authority, as a student to an experienced teacher, or as a traveller, who, having consulted his maps, finds himself on the wrong track, simply entrusts himself to an honest guide.

IV

It is not necessary, then, that we ourselves should verify a miracle to reach the fact of revelation; and, as a matter of fact, it is rare that one joins the Catholic Church because he has verified her miracles. More intimate reasons invite the search: a remnant of religion, for instance, that has persevered under scepticism or I know not what traces of the "naturally Christian" soul, or a craving for certitude

[1] Gratry, *Connaissance de l'Ame,*" Preface, vol. I, page 27.

and help, a deep sense of one's personal insufficiency and the barrenness of efforts attempted to cover the road alone and by our own means, a clear insight that man, a social being, necessarily needs the help of society even more in the sphere of religion than in the practical or scientific order, and that the indispensable help comes from social dependence.[2] Add to these and many other things the sweet and mighty touches of grace, the incomparable spectacle and the powerful attractions of the Church offering her services as a guide, a support, an indispensable teacher, whilst a glimpse of her suggests the fact that she teaches the only religion which lasts for ever and suffices for all needs.

All this is not a direct meeting with the supernatural, but it is the entrance to the road which leads to it, the desire to take the way and the disposition to accept it willingly when presented to us. If we remain faithful to those first impulses, which we may in a true sense call predisposing graces, there is no doubt but that we shall arrive, and though we be philosopher or scientist, we shall arrive by the way of the simple, the way of *human* motives of credibility. True, this way is not as lofty as the path which would lead us through a strict scientific demonstration of the divine in the world; but it

[2] Cf. Gratry, *ut supra,* p. xvii; cf. *ibid,* Vol. I, page 260 sqq. See also the beautiful thoughts of M. Ollé-Laprune, concerning Jouffroy, in *La Quinzaine,* 16 June, 1898, p. 449 sqq.

is more adapted to the weakness of isolated man, to his social nature, yea, even to the spirit of humble submission which characterizes the Catholic Faith. After all, it is a perfectly reasonable way which does not imply abdication or renouncement: for is it not reasonable to take a guide when one is ignorant of the road? Besides, we do not give ourselves over blindly to an unknown guide. We keep our liberty of verification, for we have not yet reached the Faith.

I have insisted on this point because it is important. Apologetes need not rest here; their task is to show the divine in the Catholic religion, the divine in its origin, the divine on the brow of the Church, all this by a strictly scientific demonstration. Yet a theory of faith can not neglect this simple way, since it is not by way of direct science and strict demonstration that most men are led to believe. Hence it is that the Fathers, who always faced the practical, strongly insisted upon human faith, regarding it as a necessary condition to allow oneself to be instructed and thus reach divine faith. This was in particular the subject of many a letter and discourse of St. Augustine. I am even inclined to believe that the saying which he repeated so frequently, *"Crede ut intelligas,"* though it applies above all to human Faith, is no less true of divine Faith. We grant, then, that it is not necessary to have a divine motive in order to admit the fact of

revelation. Ordinarily, with a few exceptions, it is not by having verified the divine ourselves, that we arrive at the threshold of the Faith. This clear vision, fully conscious of the *supernatural,* or, to be more exact, of the *miraculous* element in the Church, seems most frequently reserved for those who already believe.

CHAPTER IV

THE PART OF THE WILL IN THE ACT OF FAITH

We have reached this point in the genesis of faith in the individual soul: "I admit the fact of revelation." How I have arrived at this conclusion does not matter. It is enough that I am certain of it with a reasonable certitude and that I have no prudent motives for doubt. Will the immediate conclusion,—necessary or not,—be an act of Faith? By no means. The conclusion will be: "I may prudently believe this," [1] "I must believe this." [2] It may even be, in a sense, "Consequently, this is true." [3] But neither of these conclusions equals the "I believe" of faith. These previous judgments give to the act of faith an intellectual and reasonable basis; they give to the will a reason to intervene in the question by proposing faith as good, prudent, and obligatory. But they do not act directly on the intellect to make a man say,

[1] This is called the judgment of "credibility"; *Hoc est credibile.*

[2] Judgment of *credentity, Hoc est credendum.*

[3] True with an *extrinsic truth,* true *in so far as it is spoken* by a trustworthy witness, but this is not a judgment upon the *truth in itself* of the thing to be believed, of which the formula is, "This is."

"I believe," or, at least to elicit the *yes* of Faith which we seek, based not upon the evidence of the motives or upon the evidence of the testimony, but solely upon the word of God. Without the intervention of the will the intellect cannot utter this *yes*. Faith is indeed an act of the intellect, but an act which is performed at the command of the will, and this command, to use the words of St. Thomas, is essential to faith.[4] St. Augustine tersely says: "One may enter the Church against his will, approach the altar against his will, receive the Sacraments against his will; but to believe he must will." [5] Hence, no faith without liberty. This is an article of Faith.[6] After having investigated the motives of credibility and perceived their value with evidence, when I am certain that God, whom I know to be *the* Truth, has revealed such or such a truth, I can still refuse to believe, not for lack of motives,—supposing that I have certitude about previous judgments,—but because of the nature of faith itself.[7]

[4] *De Verit.*, qu. 14, art. 3, ad 10: *"Quamvis illud quod est ex parte voluntatis possit dici accidentale intellectui, est tamen essentiale fidei."*

[5] *Tr. in Ioan*, 26, n. 2; Migne, *P. G.* 35, 1607.

[6] Constitution *"Dei Filius,"* can. 3 and 5.

[7] Certain minds do not easily understand how it is possible not to believe after one is sure that God has spoken. This seems to them a monstrosity. They reduce the whole problem of faith to the question of motives of credibility. On the other hand, experience teaches that the stumbling-block is very often the

II

It is objected that this position is untenable, that our assertions are contradictory. For, "either our intellectual motives for believing seem to us sufficient, or they seem insufficient. If they seem sufficient, there is no need of the will to produce belief. If they seem insufficient, the will could never palliate this insufficiency or take itself as a motive." [8] There is a flaw in this way of reasoning. Our motives for believing are not sufficient *to pro-*

object of faith or the mystery to be believed. The Fathers and ancient theologians, like St. Thomas, for instance, have insisted on this point. The scandal of the Cross, of God made man, of God become food, etc., had to be blotted out, and to show that God had revealed they insisted less upon the motives for believing than upon the duty to subject oneself when God had spoken. They helped the mind to submit by showing the fitness of the mysteries, the natural analogies, etc. St. Augustine and St. Anselm pay much more heed to the idea that we shall see once we have believed, than to setting forth reasons for believing by proving the fact of revelation; in other words, the main problem for them is the problem of reason in faith, not reason before faith. In fact, it is the spoken thing which ordinarily gives scandal, to-day as in the days of St. Paul (cf. Acts XVII, 32); and it is because the spoken word seems unbelievable that we begin to doubt whether God has uttered it: the doubt flows from the thing to be believed upon the reasons for believing. St. Thomas understood this well when he insisted upon the fitness and the analogies of our mysteries; Pascal also, when he attempted to show first of all that religion is venerable and so lovable that we desire it to be true. These are things which the apologist should not forget.

[8] *Leçons de Philosophie* by Élie Rabier. *Psychologie*, 5th ed., p. 271.

duce a scientific assent to revealed truth; they are not sufficient *to produce the assent of faith.* I admit that "there is no need of the will" to produce the scientific assent which gives to our faith a rationally firm basis.[9] "But that, there is no need of the will" to produce the assent of Faith, I deny. It is not necessary *that the will should palliate this insufficiency, or take itself as a motive.* It suffices that the assent of faith, though founded on the best scientific reasons, be not given *in virtue of* these reasons, but for motives of another order. Hence the act of Faith is not a *scientific* act in the strict sense of the word, in as much as science implies intellectual knowledge of its object. But we know that there are two ways of knowing, equally reasonable under given conditions, and equally certain; namely, knowledge by direct evidence, and knowledge upon the testimony of another. I know well enough the way that would lead me to that beautiful castle which I am anxious to visit, and I am strong enough to walk the distance; there I could study everything, see everything for myself,—as much as one could see from without. But if I announce my visit to the master of the house, I shall be received as a friend; he will expect me, and perhaps come to meet me; he will do me the honors of his house and will

[9] Not unqualifiedly, however, as is clear from many pages of this book. See the answers of Fr. Harent, S. J., in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique,* article "Croyance," Vol. III, col. 2387–8.

speak to me. Personally, I prefer the second method.

III

It is clear, then, that the will is not needed to make up for the insufficiency of the motives. On the contrary, it is because the intellectual motives are sufficient that the will intervenes to command the intellect to elicit, not an act of knowledge, but an act of an altogether different order, *based ontologically* on scientifically unshakable foundations, but *not logically leaning* on these foundations. From the necessary intervention of the will in Faith, therefore, one cannot infer anything against the solidity and sufficiency of the reasons for believing. And it is a poor psychology indeed which cannot recognize, even in human Faith, an act of the intellect that is a perfectly reasonable, and, in a certain sense, a perfectly logical act, but where reason and logic act only *from without*,—or, as the theologians say, from extrinsic motives,—where the spark that sets off the intellect is lit by the will, and where the intellectual motive is something different from direct evidence. The truth of the matter is that the assent which is given upon the word of another,—the assent which we have called assent of "simple authority,"—essentially requires the intervention of the will. For the intellect, of itself, is determined

to affirm only by the evidence of the truth. Now since faith, *ex hypothesi,* abstracts from all evidence and relies solely upon the word of the witness, to the point of becoming impossible, I say not only if I have either the evidence of a truth or the evidence of testimony, but even if this evidence imposes itself with such clearness that it becomes impossible for me to abstract from it. You may, if you wish, call this Faith unreasonable. But if you deny its existence, you go contrary to experience. There is such a thing as a faith of simple authority, and it is, by its very nature, dependent on the will. As to the question whether it is reasonable or not, everything depends on the previous judgments. If these judgments are certain, as in the case of Christian Faith, it is clear that the will which acts in their light is reasonable; reasonable also is the obedience of the mind to this reasonable command. We shall revert to this point.

IV

To witness the intervention of the will in the act of Faith, to justify this intervention by showing that it does not in the least imply insufficiency on the part of the motives of credibility, is, however, not to supply a complete explanation. Let us study this complex mechanism a little more closely.

The question may be thus summed up: The

mind has arrived at the certain knowledge that God is worthy of faith, that God has spoken, that He has revealed, for example, the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Hence follow two evident and necessary judgments: "This mystery is believable, this mystery must be believed." The second of these two judgments asserts an obligation of the will, and becomes the voice of conscience. Obedient to this voice, the will may say: "I will believe," as, at the sound of the bell on Sunday it says, "I will go to church"; and since the will has the power to command the intellect, just as it commands the motor organs of the body, it can command the intellect to believe, as it commands the former to set the body in motion towards the church—and it is obeyed by both, at least under normal conditions. Such, reduced to its simplest terms, is the genesis of faith, without entering upon any complex psychological details. But it may not be superfluous to clear up a few points.

Even in the preliminary researches the will plays an important part. It sets the intellect to seeking; it directs this search, stands by in difficulties, dispels fantastic fears and conquers vain imaginations. Above all,—and we cannot insist too much on this point,—it places between the soul and the truth I know not what kind of a mysterious fitness, analogous to that which creates love, a certain *"co-naturalness"* (St. Thomas), in virtue of which the

truth, which, without it, perhaps appears, but only in a cold, dim light and with a brightness which blinds the eye, shows itself as a friend, whose presence gladdens and rejuvenates us, whose charms captivate us, the thought of whom stirs up delightful sympathies.

But in the assent of Faith the part played by the will is of a different character and of still greater importance.

Up to this point, if the will influenced the labor of the mind, the judgment, the intellectual affirmation, did not depend on it immediately; for when the evidence had been obtained, the intellect pronounced according to the weight of the reasons. It is otherwise in the act of Faith. Once the intellect is sure of the fact of a revelation and of the divine veracity, it exhibits to the will the advantages of faith, and intimates the obligation to believe. For the rest, it relies upon the will to execute its orders, for the execution is within the will's sphere. The will, then, enlightened by the intellect, solicited by grace, attracted by goodness and by the voice of conscience, freely says: "I will to believe." And since to believe means the assent of the mind to a truth that it does not see directly and in itself, but knows to be credible, the will lifts up the mind, so to speak, and applies to it this truth, which it could not affirm directly, since it did not see it in itself, so that the mind affirms and holds this truth, not because of

the motives or the evidence it has for it, but according to the weight of God's infinite authority, by virtue of which the mind believes as the will impels it to believe, somewhat like a mother (the comparison is very imperfect, but we need analogies and must be careful to use only the resemblances) sometimes lifts up her child and places him on a level with a mirror, so that he may see his image reflected in the mirror and lovingly kiss the child so like himself, who invited him to come, who even approached him, without ever coming down to him.

There remain but two points to be explained in this rather complex play of the two faculties: (1) What makes the will say "I will to believe?" (2) How can the intellect, under the influence of the will, give its assent without seeing?

CHAPTER V

THE WILL TO BELIEVE AND ITS MOTIVES

I

THE inclination to believe is natural to man, just as natural as the thirst for knowledge and the craving for love. A poet aptly pictures the child as "ready to believe all, but more ready to tell all," and points to the child's astonishment in view of a thing he cannot understand: "The child is silent and believes not."

With the development of reason this inclination comes, like all others, under the control of the will. Faith becomes free,—at least the Faith of simple authority, the only one in question here,—and hereafter, when acting as a man with deliberation, I believe because I will to believe. This will to believe, in the case of Christians, has received, among other names, the one of *"pious inclination to believe"* (*pius credulitatis affectus*),—a term which admirably expresses man's good will in regard to God and Faith, his disposition to believe as God wills; and far be it from us to give to this expres-

sion the meaning of a necessary instinct or a kind of blind sentiment. As we shall see later, this pious inclination begins with touches of grace and in deliberate attractions, but it ends in a perfectly free and deliberate "I will."

We must, then, look for the motives of this "I will,"—not intellectual motives, which are for the intellect, but motives of the moral order. The will is moved not by truth, but by goodness.[1]

The intellect has only to present this goodness to the will. Now, the motive that attracts the will to Faith may present itself under different forms, —under the form of an obligation, or under the form of an affectionate attraction or craving of the heart.

II

To believe is a duty. God shows His goodness to us in revealing His secrets, allowing us to partake of the knowledge which He has of Himself.

[1] We can thus see that, taking the act of Faith in the concrete, as it is and as it is made, as an act of the intellect under the power of the will,—our *motives for believing* are not solely intellectual. Moral motives or *reasons* are no less necessary, since the intervention of the will is essential to faith. They are necessary not only as preliminaries or conditions without which one would not arrive at the preliminary judgments upon the truth of revelation and the necessity to believe, but as constitutive elements of the act of Faith itself. (Cf. St. Thomas, 2a, 2ae, qu. 2, art. 2; qu. 4, art. 1; *De Veritate*, qu. 14, art. 2, etc. Cf. Appendix D, *passim*.

But His divine gift entails the obligation to accept it. When God speaks, He wills to be believed, and the obligation to believe, in the supernatural order in which it has pleased God to place us, receives new strength from the fact that Faith is the first condition for a religion which God Himself has established as necessary, the only cult which He regards as agreeable. In a word, God requires the homage of our Faith, He commands this submission of our intellect to His word, this acceptance of His divine advances.

It was this obligation, based on the essential relations between God and ourselves, which the Vatican Council had in mind when it said, at the beginning of Chapter III of the Constitution *"Dei Filius":* "Man being wholly dependent upon God as upon his Creator and Lord, and created reason being absolutely subject to Uncreated Truth, we are bound to render to God, by Faith in this revelation, the full homage and obedience of our intelligence and will." By believing we fulfill this duty, and we freely accept this obligation because we know that otherwise we should not reach our ultimate end. Hence Faith is very often called a homage, an act of submission or of obedience.

III

But even though this austere notion of duty and obligation is always at the foundation of Faith, there

are other aspects which attract the will more sweetly and sometimes more strongly. Faith is an alliance with God, a lovable gift of the sovereign goodness, to be received with thankfulness and love. It is a glimpse of the divine depths and of the world of God's secrets that His infinite condescension wishes to bring down to us; it is the assured possession,—not yet by the beatific vision, but by a union of the created intellect with Him who sees and knows,—of the most sublime and necessary truths; it is the certain solution of my most perplexing doubts; it is God's helpful hand extended to my insufficiency and weakness, and grasped with eagerness; it is the assured refuge against error, offered to my intellect and will. And it is much more which I know not. Countless are the motives that lead me to believe and cause me to receive Faith as a most precious boon: for the just, charity; for the sinners, motives of justice, hope, or that "initial love" mentioned by the Council of Trent, which does not imply sanctifying grace.

This is, indeed, a very imperfect idea of the advantages which the mind presents to the will in order to determine it to the utterance without which there could be no Faith. The will may indeed reject all these motives, it may resist the most powerful solicitations of grace. But let us suppose that it surrenders and utters the decisive "Yes," the "I

will believe," for which the intellect is waiting. What is the next step? How does the intellect, under the impulse of the will, elicit the intellectual act which is, properly speaking, the act of Faith?

CHAPTER VI

THE POWER OF THE WILL OVER THE INTELLECT: NATURE AND CONDITIONS

I

THE question is not, how does the will set the intellect in motion? This feature is not peculiar to the act of Faith. We know that the will has a sort of *political* and rather directing power over our faculties,—intellectual and sensible,—just as it has an *absolute* and *despotic* power over the body, which has no power over itself. The will acts upon our faculties in somewhat the same way as a popular orator calms the minds or excites the passions of the crowd by directing their wills, presenting such or such an object, attracting their attention to such or such an aspect of things. What really is important here is the fact that the will can cause the intellect and the other faculties to act only according to their nature, making use of their own forces and directing them. The will cannot make the intellect see when there is nothing to see, nor turn it against

what appears to it as good; it makes the intellect adhere only to what appears to be true, just as a workman cannot make his horses fly,—except metaphorically,—nor, ordinarily, make them gallop by playing the flute.

But right here the difficulty begins.

The intellect is made for the truth, like the eye for color, the ear for sound, the will for goodness. When the truth exhibits itself to the intellect in the full light of evidence, assent necessarily follows. When the truth is only probable, the intellect will form an opinion; when the truth is not in the least apparent, the mind remains suspended, without affirming or denying anything. No effort of the will can make my intellect say that the number of stars in the firmament is an even number; for, when the intellect asserts, it affirms the agreement of two terms; to affirm this agreement is to see it,—and no effort of the will could make me see what I do not see. Now, we said above that in Faith we affirm without seeing; and we took particular pains to show that the assent of Faith is motived by no evidence whatever, neither by the direct evidence of the truth nor by the indirect evidence of a testimony which we know to be true and consequently in evident relation with truth. Are we then in any way bound to forego the theory that Faith is intellectual knowledge, or must we give up the explanation which is suggested above?

II

We might answer: Here are the facts; but since this difficulty is specious, some explanations are required, the more so because the fact is not evident to all and many have devised another theory of Faith precisely to escape this difficulty.[1]

The first answer is this. There is a difference between the assent of the mind left to itself, and that of the mind under the influence of the will. Left to itself, the intellect is determined to affirm the truth only when it has evidence of the truth; under the impulse of the will, the intellect may assent upon probable reasons, affirm upon motives which really are not motives at all, and even adhere to error as firmly as to truth; in this case, at least, the intellect adheres without seeing. Hence we can understand Faith as assent without seeing, given under the impulse of the will.

The answer is plausible, and we seem to be on the right track. Still it is only an incomplete answer, and the difficulty remains. We need intellectual motives, and they are lacking. Many psychologists say that the examples given leave the question untouched. For the will obtains the assent of the

[1] De Lugo and his followers. Yet the same difficulty can be raised against their theory: for one must always admit an intellectual assent proportioned, not to the *seeing* of the motives, but to the *prompting* of the will.

intellect only according to the evidence of the motives. If I incline to one side rather than to the other, it is not properly and immediately under the influence of the will; for the will has done only one thing: it has made me see one such motive rather than the others; the will chooses the point of view and the direction of the mental application, yet never could the will make me affirm with certitude when the motives are only probable. If, sometimes, my affirmation goes farther or seems to go farther than my reasons, it is either because the will has prevented me from seeing the reasons against, or that I credit my intellect with more than it has really said. The same thing practically happens in the case of an erroneous judgment: either my intellect, urged and prejudiced by the will, pronounces too quickly on the evidence presented to it, without studying the case thoroughly, or the will interprets agreeably to its preferences the hesitations, incomplete answers, or even the silence of the mind. Everywhere we find that the intellect is "the dupe of the heart," but nowhere the dupe of itself, and, what is even more, nowhere pronouncing a judgment unless under the immediate influence of intellectual motives. Such is the opinion of renowned psychologists.[2] Their analysis may not convince everybody; no one, however, has the right to pass

[2] For instance, Rabier, *Psychologie*, p. 270, fifth edition.

it over without paying any attention to it, or by simply denying the correctness of their observations.

III

There is another way of escape. "We will grant you the truth of your statements if they refer only to the assent of *reason* or *science,* or the assent of scientific Faith. But the Faith of simple authority, the one we are concerned with here, is of a different order. Its assent is *sui generis,* irreducible. Faith and science are two different kinds of knowledge. To try to find the specific properties of the one in the other is to be off on the wrong track." Very well; but we must find out whether the *intellectual motive* is a specific element of the assent of science. Is it not, on the contrary, an essential element of *all* knowledge, the objective element or necessary complement of the material object, without which the latter would be out of reach of the cognitive faculty, and without which, consequently, knowledge would be impossible? In other words: every faculty has its *formal* object; by taking away the intellectual motive of Faith we deprive the intellect of its *formal* object and make the act of faith a sort of blind movement. Faith would be no longer knowledge, and it would be impossible to see how it could be an intellectual act. We have been led to study the intellectual mechanism of the act of Faith.

Can we recognize in this act the general conditions of intellectual knowledge? Yes; and without attempting to explain every detail, we will endeavor to show that it contains within itself all that the mind needs in order that it may know and judge.

CHAPTER VII

THE INTELLECTUAL MOTIVE AND THE VIEW OF THE OBJECT IN FAITH

I

Up to this point we have been careful to separate the preliminary judgments from the judgment of Faith. We have maintained that the latter is in no way a logical conclusion from the premises supplied by the motives of credibility. We have assigned to the will its essential part in the act of Faith. But if these judgments succeed in setting the will in motion and in furnishing it with the most solid and most reasonable motives, so that it may utter its "I will to believe," their work does not end when the will decides to say, "I will." As a pointsman in a railroad station, the will gives these judgments a new direction and their influence will now be felt in the order of Faith, in the judgment of Faith itself, not indeed to produce the conclusion, nor to determine the assent of the intellect,—as the premises of a syllogism would do,—but to offer to the intellect both the object upon which faith will pronounce (the *material object*, as theologians

call it) and the objective motive or the *formal object* necessary to every intellectual assent. To show the nature and the mode of this influence, is to demonstrate how the act of Faith realizes the conditions of a real intellectual knowledge, and how faith *without seeing* is not a *blind* faith.

II

A word of St. Thomas may offer a clue. "The mysteries of faith," he says in substance, "may be considered in two ways; in themselves in particular, and thus we do not see them by Faith; or from without in general, under the common notion of a believable thing, and thus the believer perceives them. *For he would not believe them if he would not see that he has to believe them,* either on account of the evidence of miracles, or for like reasons." [1]

The underscored words designate the *evidence of credibility:* the mysteries of Faith do not appear to me as *evidently true,* but they seem, through the motives of credibility, *evidently worthy of being believed.* It is this evidence of credibility that explains the act of Faith as an intellectual act, provided we do not limit its action, as is often done, to the preliminary judgments; thus we explain the act of Faith as a *reasonable act,* based upon certain motives and commanded by a will which has the

[1] 2a 2ae, qu. 1, art. 4, ad 2.

best reasons for acting, but not as an intellectual act, not as an act of knowledge. To believe is to believe something, as to know is to know something. Now this something, this object which I believe, is present to me in the act of Faith such as the preliminary acts have offered it to me. For instance: "Jesus Christ is God and man." In this assertion, I know the meaning of the terms, Jesus Christ, God, man, and my intellect, in pronouncing by faith this judgment: "Jesus Christ is God and man," acts consciously. What I fail to see is the connection between the terms, the identity of subject and predicate, in a word, the truth of the statement. In this respect there is a similarity between this proposition and the one we have mentioned above: "The number of stars is not an even number." I understand the meaning of each perfectly, but I do not know whether it is true or not. Suppose that a learned man,—or if I do not care to trust a scientist, suppose that an angel or one of the blessed in Heaven spoke to assure me that the number of stars is an odd number, I would not see the truth of the proposition; I would still be free to believe it or not. If I like, I may elicit an act of perfect intellectual assent to this assertion; yet I will not be more certain than if I had counted the stars myself. If I have to meet objections, I may be disturbed; but as long as the authority upon which I believe is not discredited in my eyes, I may remain certain, if I

firmly hold to the truthful word of another, and I will always see that the objections are not convincing. And if I am told that "I believe without seeing," I will answer by a distinction: "I believe without seeing the truth itself, but not without seeing the truth as believable."

III

Where then lies the difference between the two assents and the two certitudes? Is it in the presence or the absence of the object? No. Is it in the presence or the absence of the evidence? No. It lies in the difference of the evidence. When I know something, I have intrinsic evidence, a perception of the truth; when I believe, I have likewise a certain kind of evidence, but it is extrinsic to what I affirm, it is evidence of credibility. In both cases my intellect has a motive of its order, a motive of its own, a motive of evidence. Suppose I receive a parcel through the mails: everything tells me it is a book; I open the package and find that the book is sent to me by the author himself with a word of presentation. Now, if the author had announced to me his intention previously, I would have recognized his writing on the address, and it would not have been necessary to open it in order to assure myself that I had my friend's new book in my hands. Yet, there may be a mistake: the one who packed the book

may, through distraction, have put the wrong book in the parcel, or someone else may have forged the penmanship on the address or a substitution may have taken place before the book reached me. Unless I eliminate every cause of error, I shall not have *absolute* and *metaphysical* certainty. Now in the act of Faith,—I am not referring for the moment to the preliminaries,—all error is impossible, for it is God who speaks.

On either side, then, there is evidence and an intellectual motive. I may investigate or reflect on this evidence, or be content simply to affirm without further reflection, for it makes no difference to the certitude; and in this respect there is no difference between the two assents.

The difference lies elsewhere. In science, the motive *enlightens* the object. It is upon the object that the light of evidence falls. In Faith, the motive *presents* the object, but it does not *show* it in itself; it shows it in darkness. The evidence falls upon the credibility of the thing, not upon the thing itself, which remains as if covered by the motive. Hence—this is precisely the irreducible difference between science and Faith, the specific difference between our two ways of knowing—the assent of science has nothing to do with the will,[2] and the

[2] This, as far as it applies to the essence of things. For we know, that, in the psychological reality, the will may have its place in science.

assent of Faith *requires* the intervention of the will. The evidence of the truth determines the intellect to say: "This exists." The evidence of credibility only determines it to say: "This is worthy to be believed." If the intellect wants to utter the "This is" of faith, the "I believe" which is the only word that can put it into possession of the treasure offered it and which it knows to be present, the will must act as urge. Of itself the intellect reaches *evident* truth, but it is only when moved by the will that it reaches *believable* truth. Again we see clearly that the act of Faith is an assent of the intellect, given under the influence of the will. It has its intellectual motive, taken from the intelligible order, a reason for truth; but this motive acts only through and with the will. To use once more our former comparison: the child alone cannot kiss the image it sees in the mirror hanging on the wall; but the mother may lift the child, and then the kiss becomes possible.

IV

At the same time we understand that the assent of the mind, given under the influence of the will, may be in proportion to the dignity of the motive. Such or such a truth spoken by God, who is the Supreme Truth, is worthy of supreme and absolute adhesion. The mind of itself would not give this

adhesion; but just as a believable object deserves faith and receives it under the impulse of the will, so the object which is sovereignly believable deserves a sovereign faith, and receives it under the impulse of the will.[3] Here again, strictly speaking, the intellectual assent does not go beyond its motive; but the motive is complex: an infallible, objective motive, the divine authority, worthy of sovereign faith, but without *direct* influence upon the intellect to attract it; a subjective motive, an impulse of the will, completing the moving force of the evidence, and bringing the mind into contact with the supreme Truth. In a word, what the *evident* truth is to the mind, the *credible* truth is to the mind moved by the will. It is clearly understood that the moving force being in the will and not in the object, the mind does not by itself hold fast to the truth. The mind adheres to the truth, but does not embrace it. Thus faith never gives it full satisfaction; doubt remains possible, and if the will, banishing the doubt, fixes the intellect in the assent to the truth, the latter does not find there the full rest that it craves for. Used to search and doubt as long as it has not seen, it finds itself bound by a strange force, a captive when it is so proud of its liberty, a

[3] Without taking account of grace, which will be mentioned later.

subject when so jealous of its independence.[4] Here, to a certain extent, lies the sacrifice of faith and the reason for its difficulty. But leaving aside all, even the intellectual advantages, of such a happy subjection, submission is a duty here, and love sweetens it. For who is happier: the loving obedient child of the best and richest of fathers or the wandering tramp who is starving and far from doing his own will, is for ever slaving under an insolent and harsh master?

[4] All this has been admirably said by St. Thomas, *De Verit.*, qu. 14, art. 1. See Appendix D, 2.

CHAPTER VIII

NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL FAITH

I

We have hardly mentioned so far the supernatural character of Faith. Still, it is an important point, to which many a delicate problem can be traced. I would not be at all surprised if more than one theologian who takes the trouble to read these pages and who is ready to emphasise the *supernatural* in faith—said to himself: "All that would perfectly fit natural faith. But the author forgets that faith is essentially supernatural, and hence his explanations and analyses are of no value. He wishes to simplify the problem. But he suppresses it, since he leaves out an essential element." The objection is serious. From the mere fact that it is made we see how difficult it is to take a firm footing in these matters and how fluctuating and uncertain ideas in this field are. Fortunately the objection can be answered: we reassure ourselves with the thought that the fragility of a theory of Faith does not come precisely from the fact that it is not

based on the distinction between natural and supernatural Faith.

All theologians agree, and common sense tells us, that there may be a purely natural Faith given to the word of God. Since I believe a man, who can deceive himself and may deceive me, *a fortiori* should I believe God, of whom I know that He is knowledge and truth itself. We see the vast difference between this kind of Faith and human Faith; even if it is not (for this is impossible) as great as the distance between divine authority and human authority; still natural Faith in God will give an absolute assurance, abandonment, certitude, as is becoming when dealing with the supreme and infallible authority. Where does the difference lie between this natural faith in God and the supernatural Christian faith? The two acts must be entirely different; in what does this difference consist?

II

If we take Suarez and his followers literally, it would seem that all natural Faith is reducible to the idea of the evidence of testimony, and supernatural Faith has for its distinctive characteristic that it is Faith on simple authority. Often this Faith on simple authority is pictured as something mysterious, as faith based upon Faith, as something unique and singular, without analogy in human Faith. If this

would lead to nothing else but to deprive human Faith of absolute certitude in the complete surrender and perfect abandonment, this union of infallible and sovereignly reasonable security with the renunciation of personal reasons,—it would be true (remaining within the line of faith, of course). If it meant only a denial of the existence of Faith on simple authority in human affairs, or simply of its reasonableness, we should call it an error, for we believe that such a Faith does exist and that experience proves the fact. On the other hand, it is easy to show its reasonableness, for it would be no less nor any more reasonable than scientific Faith, since *the motives of credibility* on either side are the same, although the *intrinsic motive of faith* is different. But such an error would, of itself, lead to no grave consequences for the theory of divine faith. It would be quite another matter to say that there is an inexplicable element in supernatural Faith, *inasmuch as it is Faith,* and to make this element consist in this that in supernatural faith not only do we have to believe the revealed object, but also the authority which reveals, in so far as the latter is the motive of Faith, and to have recourse to some obscure idea of a God speaking from the cloud; this would bring confusion where clearness is most needed; it would render the psychological theory of faith impossible, and, I fear, it might give to unbelievers and even to some Catholics the impression

that the fundamental act of our religion is nothing more than a false mysticism, something like an initiation into the pagan mysteries of old. Let us briefly take the question up again. Our theory of Faith, far from being shaken by it, will find in it a new support; and if, towards the end, the way divides and becomes uncertain, we promise to remove the uncertainty and we shall take advantage of this difficulty to see more clearly that we were on the right way.

III

The act of Faith is supernatural. This means, first of all, that it cannot be made without a special help from God, distinct from the general concurrence necessary for the making of each and every one of our actions. Without this special help we cannot say, "I will to believe," and without the will to believe there is no Faith. This help is also indispensable,—nothing being willed without previous proportional knowledge, nor is there any good resolution without a good thought—for the practical judgment which directs the will and leads it to the decisive "I will." But God has already intervened,—long ago, and though it was not absolutely necessary. Indeed to every man that comes from unbelief to Faith God could say, "You would not seek Me if you had not already found Me." He has

multiplied the utterances of love: divine calls and helps of an all-loving Providence. A kind of aurora of faith were this vague restlessness, that craving for strength and truth, these attractions toward goodness and religion, this courage in the search in spite of present difficulties and prospective sacrifices, this wholesome light which led the way and dissipated objections and prejudices.

Whether these helps were *essentially* supernatural, as is the act of Faith and the pious will to believe, is a disputed question among theologians, which does not concern us here. What we must remember for the moment is, that the act of Faith and the pious will to believe are supernatural in their *being*. At least this is the common opinion, and it seems imprudent to deny it.

This not only means that God intervenes in a special manner to produce that help,—as when He miraculously restored sight to the blind,—but that this help, of itself, is of a distinct nature,—it is divine.

IV

From this point on, the soul elicits acts which no creature could produce by its own power, viz., with its natural forces, sustained by the proportioned divine concurrence which nature needs for action. I could naturally say, "I will believe" and also "I

believe." But these two acts would be entirely different *in their physical being* from Christian Faith and the pious will to believe,—just as water and wine are both beverages, but different in kind. Thus God, in lending us for the act of Faith something of the divine power with which He knows Himself, imparts to the acts produced something of the divine perfection, something divine [1]—as light at length penetrates the crystal and renders it luminous, or as fire transmits its properties to iron.

The divine principle, thus coöperating with man, gives to the act other perfections far greater than any natural cause could do. In this manner the act becomes principally what it would be as natural Faith, namely a fellowship of knowledge with God, in whom we believe. Though our union with God is not complete unless Faith is *"informed by charity"* and the will to believe animated by the love of God, who deigns to reveal His secrets as a friend to a friend, or a father to his son, it nevertheless is true of all supernatural Faith that "he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him," and that "we transform ourselves into the same image as by the spirit of the Lord," whom Faith makes known to us.[2] We can realize, then, what kind of certitude and firmness the intellectual adhesion will receive

[1] Theologians call it *deiformis*. I have explained this point at length in my book, *Nature et Surnaturel*, Ch. 2.

[2] 1 Cor. VI, 79; 2 Cor. III, 18.

from both the supernatural light, which strengthens the natural light of our own mind, and the supernatural power, which lifts our will to believe into a higher sphere, where it can conquer all difficulties and repel all doubts. Our mind acquires by Faith something of the divine infallibility, something of its firmness in the possession of truth. This is the magnificent reward of the sacrifice we make of our own views in order to accept the views of God.

We have briefly sketched the main features which our act of Faith receives from that supernatural principle with which we make it,—whatever may be the nature of this principle, a transient help for those who do not yet possess the infused virtue of faith, or, for the faithful, a permanent and as it were natural supplement given by God to our intellect to fit it for the supernatural act.

CHAPTER IX

THE FORMAL OBJECT OF SUPERNATURAL FAITH

So far we have been able to affirm with certitude. Now begins the field of controversy,—an obscure and a confused controversy in which the very positions are not yet definitely stated. This question is styled by Schoolmen "the specification of the supernatural act of Faith by its formal object."

I

No one doubts that (generally speaking) human acts are specified by their formal object or motive. But whether an act, in *so far as it is supernatural,* always requires a supernatural motive, and whether the absolute necessity of grace for supernatural acts comes precisely from the disproportion of the faculty to this motive or formal object, is denied by many, who point to the confusion that their adversaries seem to make between the specification of the act as a moral act and its specification as a supernatural act. This does not affect our theory of Faith. What must be held is that the act of supernatural

Faith does not differ, *as a psychological act, or as an act of Faith,* from the natural act of Faith. Both are acts of Faith, and have the same essential characteristics, *viz.,* those of Faith in general, and the same psychological scope; just as the supernatural love of God, as an act of love, does not differ from the natural love of a creature. If we abandon this position, we fall into arbitrary views; we minimise the value of every explanation of Faith, we make void the traditional argument employed by St. John: "If we received the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater." The act of supernatural Faith is an act of Faith, and as such is explained like any other act of Faith,—and this is what we have tried to do. *Qua* supernatural it possesses a perfection of its own, a firmness and truth, a proportion to the dignity of the divine testimony, a moral value, which nature could not reach, everything depending upon the supernatural principle which produces the act with us and through us.

II

But the question arises: Does the divine authority which is the motive and formal object of Faith, specify the assent of supernatural Faith with a supernatural character, which would not be found in the divine authority as the motive and formal object of natural Faith? This question is generally an-

swered in the negative by those who recognise only scientific Faith founded upon the evidence of testimony. Most of those who adopt the theory of Faith on simple authority give an affirmative answer.[1] But generally the answers are not given in order to explain the act of faith, but are dictated by the necessities of a system, in order that consistency might prevail in applying to Faith principles which are elsewhere admitted,[2] or because the concept of Faith held by these theologians requires such an answer to the present question.[3]

From what we have explained above we are not obliged to answer the question either in the affirmative or in the negative, and hence no general consideration of system can influence our decision; our answer will be that which seems to fit best the notion of supernatural Faith.

[1] Cardinal Billot is an exception.

[2] This is the case of those who hold that all specific differences between acts result, in the last analysis, from a specific difference between their formal objects. This does not apply to Cardinal Billot. On the contrary, I have been told that it was his analysis of Faith which made him reject the general thesis of the specification of acts by their formal object. His difficulty was not concerning the judgment of Faith, but concerning the judgment of credentity, which, according to the Church's teaching, is supernatural, and to which the eminent theologian does not see that one could give a distinct formal object. Other theologians believe the thing possible.

[3] Those who uphold the theory of scientific Faith believe themselves obliged, in virtue of their position, to deny that natural Faith and supernatural Faith differ at all as to their formal object.

I may naturally believe a revealed truth upon the word of God, as I naturally believe upon the word of man. In matter of fact, I believe it supernaturally, and this supernatural assent is produced not by the mind alone (with the ordinary assistance of God), but by the mind aided in a special manner (which aid we call grace) and, since we speak of a Christian, by the mind acting with and through the virtue of Faith. But what is it that determines me to give a supernatural assent, rather than a natural one? In other words, what sets the virtue of Faith in action? It is the will aided by grace. I make an act of supernatural Faith because I wish to make an act of supernatural Faith. Is it not one of the properties of the *habitus* of virtue to be subject to the will (*habitibus utimur cum volimus*)? Does not St. Thomas say that the virtue of faith acts like the will rather than the intellect? [4]

III

We might stop here and give no further decision on the specification of the act of Faith by its formal object. But, taking the question from the concrete and real point of view, we may, it seems, add some further useful explanations to bring to light the

[4] *Hic tamen habitus non movet per viam intellectus, sed magis per viam voluntatis.* St. Thomas, *In Boet. de Trinit.*, qu. 3, art. 1, ad 4.

proper character and the sublimity of Christian Faith.

Let us suppose,—the supposition is not, as is often intimated, gratuitous,—that the act of supernatural Faith differs from the natural act not only by virtue of its *principle,* as vision with the naked eye differs from vision with a magnifying glass; not only by its *being,* as two statues of the same mould differ if one is of gold and the other of brass; but also by its *formal object.* Can we imagine this difference? To a certain extent we can. But we will never arrive at an experimental proof, for the supernatural is not, as such and in itself, an object of human consciousness.[5]

Let us take the case of an infidel who is about to make his first act of Faith. He has scientifically verified that God has spoken, that He has sent Christ in His name to instruct us and to found the Church. Together with and besides this cold and dry science, he has wholesome supernatural thoughts in his mind, and his will receives supernatural impulses.[6] During the instruction given by the mis-

[5] St. Thomas (*S. Th.,* 1a 2ae, qu. 112, art. 5, ad 2) likely means, according to the context, real consciousness of the act. But this knowledge has for its object the act, in so far as it is a psychological act, or certain intellectual adhesion, and not—which is the case only in mystical states,—in so far as it is a supernatural act.

[6] Illumination and inspiration, says the Church.

sionary, grace makes the man see things, so to speak, from within, in a different light and as if under a different aspect. God, whom he has just recognized[7] as the author of nature is presented to him and presents Himself to him as the author of a superior order. He is no longer merely the Creator and Lord. He is a loving Father, who looks upon men not only as His servants, but as His children, for whom He has in store after this probation on earth a happiness which the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, and the heart of man could never attain. This divine heritage is the participation in God's blessed life through knowledge and love, the face to face vision, a love proportionate to this knowledge, a filial love, a love produced in us, like the beatific vision itself, by a divine principle. God wills to prepare men for such a high destiny. He wills that they should prepare themselves, as it behooves intelligent and free beings, who know where they go and go of their own free choice. So He stoops down to us, not as a strange master, but as a father who teaches his son and reveals to him little by little every family secret. He comes to initiate man into the divine life of knowledge and love of God as He is in Himself, He wills to make

[7] I say *"recognized"* because there already had been a previous cognition, but obscure, implicit, and confused.

men capable even here below of knowing and loving that God, *as* He knows and loves Himself, in a *god-like* fashion. Now, the formal object of this godlike knowledge must be something divine, the first Truth revealing itself obscurely, and stooping down to us. Hence, the pious will to believe has its supernatural motive, namely, the divine good to be possessed directly, the supernatural end; hence faith, to which the will prompts the intellect, has its formal and specific object, since God asks and requires full submission of the intellect,—not only the God whom we know through His creatures, but the God who deigns to manifest Himself to us by revelation. Thus everything becomes supernatural in Faith,—the principle and the object, the motive of the will and the motive of the intellect. We now understand better the close relationship of faith to the beatific vision. It also becomes clearer to us in what sense the theologians, following St. Thomas and St. Paul himself, as it would seem, see in the act of Faith the beginning of the eternal life, an initiation into the beatific vision.[8]

We can scarcely hope that this explanation will settle all the controversies that rage about the formal object of faith. But it suffices to show

[8] 2 Cor III, 18; cfr. Hebr, XI, 11; S. Thomas, 2a 2ae, qu. 2, art. 3. *Infra,* Appendix D, n. 28.

the vast difference between natural and supernatural Faith, and also to indicate where that difference lies and where it must not be looked for.[9]

[9] This aspect of Faith has been strikingly brought out in some theses defended before the Faculty of Theology in Paris, March 7, 1898, by Fr. Séguier (*"L'Acte de Foi,"* a reprint from the *Annales de Philosophie Chrétienne,* 1893, p. 12). Séguier's theory is entirely opposed to ours, as he advocates and pushes to an extreme the idea of scientific Faith. He finds himself obliged, as a consequence, to seek the necessary conditions for the freedom of Faith, its obscurity, and supernatural character, *outside the line of knowledge.*

CHAPTER X

VARIOUS QUESTIONS

We have reached the end of our investigation. We have seen the nature of Faith. We have tried to understand its workings and its mechanism. Along the way we gathered some necessary notions concerning the essential properties of Faith. But more than one question still remains unanswered. We will examine some of these questions briefly, in the light of what we have said above, and in so doing shall group our ideas together and make, as it were, an inventory.

I

First of all: is the act of Faith a *rational* act? We know what battles have been fought around this question and how unbelievers of all sorts constantly harp on the irreducible antinomy between reason and faith.

This fundamental question offers no difficulties for us. But since the word *rational* is frequently used vaguely, let us in order to answer our question, replace it by its several equivalents.

If by *rational* we mean *reasonable,* the answer to our question is in the affirmative. An act which right reason approves or commands must be a reasonable act. Now, such is the act of Faith, no matter from what side you look at it. It is reasonable to believe on the strength of certain motives of credibility. We have such motives: the most securely established facts, the most reliable witnesses, the most indisputable reasons. One cannot logically deny the legitimate foundation of our belief without denying by that very fact all historical and philosophical certitude. Note, too, that Faith *requires* these solid foundations. Without them one can make an instinctive act of Faith, but it would be impossible to make acts of Christian Faith. Hence, from this point of view our Faith is not only reasonable, but it may be strictly scientific.

It is reasonable, also, from the point of view of the will. A commanded act is reasonable when the act which commands it is reasonable. Now, such is evidently the act of the will which commands Faith, since it is directed by true and certain judgments.

Faith is reasonable, finally, from the point of view of its intrinsic motive. Is it not sovereignly reasonable to believe an infallible authority, to believe as strongly as one can a divine authority?

If by a *rational* act is meant an *act of reason,* we must distinguish. The act of Faith is an act of rea-

son because it is an intellectual act, an act *produced by the intellect.* It is also, or can be, an act of reason in the sense that it is, or could be, perfectly *reasoned,* having, as we have seen, reasonable and scientific foundations. But it is not an act of *reasoning reason;* for we have shown that our faith is not *discursive,* as scientific faith would be. Faith of simple authority is not produced by reasons or arguments; the will commands the act, and then supplies the motives of reason. Not that these motives are insufficient as motives of reason, but because our Faith is essentially not an assent of pure reason *produced* by motives of reason. Its proper intrinsic motive is *authority,* and authority, *by itself,* can exercise a determining influence upon the intellect only by the intervention of the will. Must we conclude, then, that there exists an antinomy between reason and faith? Not at all. The answer lies in the irreducible distinction between two distinct kinds of knowledge; for, as we have seen, faith has for its basis unshakable motives of reason.

This is also the answer to two similar questions: Is Christian faith logical? Is it scientific? It is *not an act of logic,* but it is *a perfectly logical act.* Certainly those are lacking in logic and fail to go the whole length of their own principles, who, facing faith and Christian affirmations, do not reach the desired end. Whether they are responsible be-

fore God for such a lack of logic, is not for me to decide. But the fact remains that those men are not logical who reject the Christian Faith after having once received it, or push it aside when it presents its credentials to them. Neither is the act of Faith an act of science, if by *science* is meant a *seeing* of the truth, either in itself or in a truthful testimony; but nevertheless Faith is real knowledge, knowledge that may become *scientific;* and it will always be unscientific, illogical, and unreasonable to deny either an article of Faith or the facts and truths which are at the foundation of our Faith; for to do that is, to say the least, to affirm something without knowing, and nearly always to affirm lightly or under the influence of passion or prejudice.

II

There remain certain other questions to be discussed, not with unbelievers to justify our faith, but with Catholics, the better to understand it. How can one pass from science to Faith, from natural to supernatural acts? Is there, as is often said, a plunge *into the dark,* is there between the two orders of knowledge an abyss, which can be crossed only by him who is carried on the wings of Faith and led by the hand of God? Or is there a bridge by which this abyss may be crossed? Is

it possible to arrive at faith without *throwing oneself*, as it were, into the arms of God? In a word, is there, or is there not, continuity between science and Faith?

From what we know the answer is easy. The passage from the preliminary acts to the act of Faith is not made by logical deduction, as Hermes maintained. Neither is it made from the evidence of the testimony, as is the case in scientific Faith and in historical Faith, where the testimony becomes for the scientist the motive for adhering,—not formally, *qua* testimony, but as an evident sign and trustworthy vehicle of the truth. The Faith of the Christian believer is not, as such, a scientific faith. The passage is made by the will, the act is made under the influence of a moral force. Enlightened by the preliminary judgments upon the veracity of God and upon the fact that He has spoken, the will finds itself in the presence of a supreme authority which demands and imposes Faith, and freely bowing before this authority,—which by itself remains without any influence upon the intellect,—the will accepts the obligation; and since the execution belongs to another faculty, it urges the intellect to believe, just as it may urge it to pray or to study, or to set the hand or foot in motion.

The will, morally moved by the good there is to be found in Faith, says, "I will," and physically

moves the mind towards the object which the preliminary acts have made present to it, without, however, giving to this object the power of determining by itself another assent besides the one of credibility. Thus moved by the will, the intellect adheres to the credible truth, not because it sees that truth, nor because it is influenced by the evidence of its reasons, but according to the deserts of the First Truth, *i. e.,* God, who requires absolute assent and is worthy of a boundless, and, if it were possible, of an infinite faith. It is the will, then, that makes the intellect pass from science to Faith.

III

But does not the intellect in this process lose its moorings and take a blind plunge into the dark? Even if this were true, it would not affect the act of Faith, which would not for that reason be any the less good or reasonable. When one is sure to fall into the arms of God, must not one throw himself, as the child into the arms of his mother? *"Projice te in eum: non se subtrahet ut cadas."* To come back to the child: if the mother tells him to "shut his eyes, and open his mouth, and swallow the candy," may the child not do so with perfect trust?

But the act of Faith is not and cannot be performed in that way, for it is an intellectual act, an

act of knowledge. The truth is always present to the mind, and present in the light of evidence. Not indeed the evidence of truth, but the evidence of credibility, throwing light on the object only from the outside, but lighting it up in such a way that Faith is obscure only from within. While *Faith* embraces the object in darkness, *the intellect of the believer* remains in the light which shows the object as believable, and can at any time look at it from that point of view.

I may even go farther. Faith does not rest upon the evidence of testimony. Its motive is neither the direct nor the indirect evidence of the truth. But there is nothing to show that Faith is incompatible with this indirect evidence. I do not believe that the mind can make simultaneously an act of simple Faith and an act of scientific Faith, though some theologians hold it to be possible; but the act of scientific Faith which frequently precedes the act of simple Faith may or may not cease without leaving some trace in the mind; neither is it necessary that the evidence which determines the believer to the first act should not make itself felt at all in the second; it suffices that the second act be in no way made under the influence of the first. nor under the influence of the evidence which has determined it.

The act of Faith is consequently not a blind act Light is given at every instant. Although this light

does not fall upon the truth which I affirm, to make me see its intrinsic evidence, it constantly shows me that I am right in affirming.

IV

Hence we perceive what kind of continuity there can be between science and Faith. It is not a logical continuity, such as would make of the act of Faith a conclusion from a syllogism. But the intellect, under the influence of the will, leaves the way of logic to take another route, much surer, safer and more sublime. There is no impossible abyss between the two. The believer resembles a child who in reaching for a toy permits his mother to carry him to it, and has but to extend his little hands and seize it, instead of making frantic efforts to clutch it.

There is, then, between science and Faith, a logical discontinuity and a change of mental processes. Father Rickaby, addressing a student body at Oxford, said: "To reach to banks of faith, you must step out of the rowboat which has taken you up to these banks, the rowboat being the boat of science." If there is discontinuity, there is, however, no *hiatus*. It is ordinarily not necessary to throw oneself into the river in order to reach the opposite shore: one can build a bridge from the boat to the wharf.[1] There

[1] This does not contradict the experience of converts, who uanimously say that one *must take the plunge*. This impression

is not even complete discontinuity. For the intellect, carried by the will from science to Faith, never for a moment loses sight of the object. The intellect itself says where it wishes to be led, and while it is being led, it constantly indicates the way and the destination. The act of Faith is not a vision of the truth, but it is made in the light, and the torch of reason is not extinguished in the sanctuary of Faith. While walking hand in hand with the divine guide, I can freely look around me.

True, "the intellect rides a blind horse in submitting to the will;" but while riding the will, the intellect directs it and looks ahead for it.

After all we should not imagine the faculties of

is due not so much to a lack of light, or to any motive of the intellectual order, as to moral causes: necessary separations, the unknown and uncertain future, a thousand seeming phantoms one meets on the way . . . somewhat like Columbus leaving for an unknown land, like fear in the face of death or at the thought of a hereafter. This is why, leaving all other reasons aside, conversion requires so much courage and generosity, so much confidence in God and abandonment to His will. There is, after all, though in a less degree, something similar in many instances of Christian life, as, for instance, at the start of an important spiritual enterprise. God wants our confidence, He wants us to rely entirely on Him, but He wishes us to act prudently; and He knows how to handle divinely the lights and obscurities, to extend a hand and retract it, as a mother to her child. Those who know the mystical states say that these obscurities and uncertainties, however much they may be filled with light and infallible assurance, are nevertheless a real test for the souls whom God has called, and require a self-abandonment and a detachment which nothing can describe.

man as if they were isolated and separate. St. Thomas repeats frequently that it is not the intellect that sees, but man through the intellect, nor the will that wil s, but man through the will. So it is with Faith. It is the man who sees the motives of credibility, who wishes to believe and who believes. The oneness of the subject brings about unity and continuity in all the actions of the different faculties. Neither should we look upon the act of Faith as standing alone, without any relation to the preliminary acts. Here again the oneness of the subject brings about unity; so, for instance, in the intellectual acts. It is the same intellect that has seen the motives for believing, and believes; the same inte lect that has realized that this or that obscure statement is guaranteed by divine authority, and believes upon the strength of this authority. In this complex act of Faith we must not lose sight of its harmony. There is harmony of acting principles, harmony of preliminary acts in view of the principal act. For the sake of analysis indeed we isolate and separate them. But in reality they are united, commanded by one agent; all, so to speak, but one.

On this blending of a capital distinction with an intimate union between the preliminary acts and the act of Faith, Fr. Kleutgen says profoundly: "As intellectual knowledge presupposes sensible knowledge without being evolved from it, so faith presup-

poses natural reasoning, but is by no means founded upon it." [2]

No intellectual knowledge is possible without sense knowledge. But both are distinct and irreducible. Still there is continuity between the idea and the image presented by the senses. In the words of St. Thomas, there is a *"continuatio quaedam intellectus ad phantasmata."*

Thus it is that the preliminary knowledge and the knowledge of Faith are distinct, yet united. The former could never determine the latter, but gives it its object and motive. The same thing is true of the natural and supernatural forces which contribute to the act of Faith. Grace intervenes, God acts; but the divine action, the intervention of grace, does not annihilate or change the actions of the natural forces of the intellect and the will; rather it elevates and perfects them. In the human body, for instance, the physical and chemical forces remain in full action; but under the influence of the living soul intimately united with the body, this action is elevated and becomes capable of producing effects of life and sensibility.

V

There remains one last question, which we will answer briefly. Why do we believe, and how can

[2] *Theologie der Vorzeit*, Vol. 4, n. 286, p. 532. Münster, 1873.

we believe? We must distinguish, for this question may have more than one meaning. The proper motive of Faith is "because God has revealed it." But why do we believe God when He speaks? Because God is worthy of belief. This is the ultimate reason, and it would be absurd to demand more. If I am asked why I affirm that two and two are four, I sufficiently answer that question by saying that I plainly see the truth of the assertion. In Faith, the divine authority of the witness takes the place of evidence. But we go beyond the boundaries of the act of Faith when we assert that the motives of credibility only guarantee the fact that God has revealed.

How is it that I can believe? Simply because I will to believe. Why do I will to believe? I may answer by giving you a thousand motives which influence my will. I will to believe, for instance, because I must believe; I will to believe because it is a means of showing my love and respect to God; I will to believe because to believe is a necessary condition of eternal life, and so forth.

If you go farther, and ask me how it is that I can make an act which I myself consider supernatural and above all created power, I answer: because I have the grace of God, which is given to all men, and which makes the act of Faith possible and easy for those who coöperate with grace.

And if you ask me where I find the word of God

and how I recognize it, I answer: in Scripture and Tradition. The Church, the trustworthy depositary and infallible interpreter of the word of God, tells me what God has revealed. I believe her, for I am sure that she cannot deceive me. Through her I belong to that great army of Catholics spread all over the world, that innumerable body of believers who have lived in her communion and died for her during the past nineteen centuries. God grant that in finishing these pages, we may all be able to repeat, with a more ardent love for that great gift of Faith, with a stronger and clearer conviction and a more intense desire to live as true believers, that act which makes us true believers: "I firmly believe all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because Thou, O my God, hast revealed them, who canst neither deceive nor be deceived."

APPENDIX A

THE THEORY OF THE ACT OF FAITH STATED IN SEVEN PROPOSITIONS

To give the reader a clear-cut view of the theory expounded in this little work, I thought it good to sum it up in seven short propositions. They do not say everything—they will perhaps be understood only after the reading of the book. My purpose is not to make it unnecessary to read the book, but to bring its outstanding points more clearly before the mind of the reader. If he wants the whole doctrine, he must read the book.

I give these propositions in Latin, first, because they came to me in that language, and, secondly, because in no other language could they be more pregnant, more striking and more easily remembered.

ASSERTUM I

Mens humana duplicem habet modum judicandi de vero, alterum per rei evidentiam, alterum per fidem. Qua fide homo cognitionem alterius facit quodammodo suam, sectando pro rei evidentia evidentiam credibilitatis.

Note: For the development of this proposition, see Chapter II of Part I.

ASSERTUM II

Cum duplex sit fides, altera ad scientiam propior ob evidentiam veritatis in attestante, qua scilicet ipsi verum ex alterius testimonio investigamus ac de eo secundum perspectas proprio judicio rationes pronuntiamus—qualis est fides historica,—altera ob solam dicentis auctoritatem ejus dictis simpliciter inhærendo: ad hanc alteram videtur omnino pertinere actus fidei theologicæ, quo res a Deo dictas veras esse certo judicamus non ex ulla rei evidentia sive intrinseca sive extrinseca (vel in attestante), sed unice ob Dei dicentis testimonium formaliter sumptum. Cujusmodi fides non potest in terris nisi ex libero voluntatis imperio haberi.

Note: This proposition states the whole question of Faith on simple authority, and of scientific Faith. See Chapters III, IV, V, of Part I.

ASSERTUM III

Judicia prævia quanquam sunt ad fundandum assensum fidei necessaria, non ipsa tamen intellectum directe determinant ad assentiendum veritati revelatæ, sed cum motiva objectiva voluntati suppetunt cur prudenter et honeste intellectum moveat ad assensum fidei, tum intellectui assensus objectum utrumque præparant, materiale vel rem revelatam, formale vel rationem assentiendi.

Note: This shows the rôle of the preliminary judgments. Although necessary as the only solid basis for reasonable Faith, they do not determine the act of Faith, but give to the two faculties which intervene in that

act their object and motives:—to the will the reasons to command the act, to the intellect, the objective conditions of any intellectual act, a truth and a motive of adhesion. See Chapters II, III, IV, of Part I.

ASSERTUM IV

Intellectus, etsi rei veritatem intrinsece in actu fidei non videt, non caece tamen et sine motivo proprio credit sub motione voluntatis, cum et ipse voluntati credendi præluceat, et terminos judicii propositi apprehendat, et eorum veritatem extrinsece "sub communi ratione credibilis" (S. Th.) perspiciat, et præsens habeat in ipso actu fidei motivum credendi sufficiens, auctoritatem divinam. Unde fit ut fides sit et certa rei cognitio per quandam divinæ cognitionis appropriationem, in quo actu pro evidentia rei stet auctoritas divina.

Note: We wanted to indicate here how the act of Faith is true intellectual knowledge, and how, in spite of the obscurity of the object, it lacks nothing which would give to a judgment of the intellect its certitude and truth. See Chapter VI of Part I, and Chapters V, VI, VII, of Part II.

ASSERTUM V

Intellectus in actu fidei non modo articulum revelatum attingit, sed etiam auctoritatem Dei revelantis; aliter tamen alterum: articulum *ut quod* (id est ut rem quæ creditur et de qua est judicium fidei), auctoritatem non proprie *ut quod* (id est ut rem de qua sit vel fides vel

scientia), sed *ut cui creditur,* vel ut id propter quod articulus creditur (id est ut rationem assentiendi articulo). Melius ergo negatur utrumque, vel *credi* in actu fidei vel *sciri* auctoritatem divinam.

Note: This article touches the delicate question of the intellectual rôle of the motive in the act of Faith itself. We say that the motive must be, in the act of Faith, present to the intellect, and consequently, reached by it in a certain way; but we carefully distinguish the material object or revealed article from the formal object or motive, and we add that the revealed article is properly that upon which the judgment of Faith is made; this judgment is not, strictly speaking, prompted by the motive (only the material object can claim this). Hence it follows that the divine authority, *in so far as it is the motive of faith,* is, strictly speaking, neither "believed by faith" nor "scientifically known." To understand this, one has but to analyze an act of human Faith, and take as object for the analysis not scientific Faith, but Faith on simple authority. This point is touched upon in nearly every chapter of the book, but especially in Chapter VI of Part I.

ASSERTUM VI

Assensus fidei non est ullo modo discursivus *formaliter* (neque formaliter implicite neque formaliter explicite), sive intelligitur discursus ex motivis credibilitatis prævie cognitis ad assensum fidei tanquam ad conclusionem, sive intelligitur discursus proprie dictus in ipso actu fidei ex assensu in auctoritatem loquentis ad assensum in articulum. Quanquam potest vocari *materialiter* (vel etiam

æquivalenter) discursivus, quatenus mens credentis, uno eodemque actu simplici, mediante quodammodo (prout scilicet *mediat* objectum formale motivum) auctoritate divina, articulum credit, habetque in ea (non minus quam mens scientis in principiis logicis) quo firmetur fidei assensus;—modo ne intelligatur assensum credentis *in ratione tendendi* quidquam habere de discursu *formali.*

Note: We explained in Chapter III of Part I and Chapter X of Part II, how Faith on simple authority is not *discursive.* What is said here is but the conclusion of the second and the fifth proposition.

ASSERTUM VII

Quæ adhuc dicta sunt, fidei theologicæ conveniunt *ut fides est. Ut supernaturalis* vero, fides nostra quædam sibi vindicat propria, idque multiplici ex capite: ex parte principii agentis, ex parte piæ motionis ad credendum, in modo subjectivo attingendi utrumque objectum per vires quodammodo divinas, in ratione certitudinis et veritatis, in proportione actus ad finem supernaturalem—in quibus omnes Catholici consentiunt.

Utrum in modo quoque objectivo attingendi objectum formale (in *ratione sub qua*) aliquid peculiare habeat fides supernaturalis, an secus, quæstio est inter Catholicos controversa, quæ, si philosophice spectatur, eo redit num actus non modo ut actus *talis potentiæ,* nec modo ut actus *moralis,* sed etiam ut *supernaturalis,* specificam aliquam, pro ea quoque supernaturalitatis differentia, non ex parte principii solum sed etiam in ratione objectiva sub qua attingitur objectum formale, differentiam requirat.

Quæ controversia non tanta est ut ab ea pendeat tota de actu fidei theoria; modo admittatur, quod concedendum esse contendimus, *eumdem* esse in utraque fide, naturali et supernaturali, *processum psychologicum.*

Quanquam nobis, *theologice* rem spectantibus, videtur *de facto*—nam de necessitate metaphysica non quærimus—eo modo et in revelando et in exposcendo assensum fidei intervenire divinam auctoritatem et veritatem, atque, quod consequens est, attingi objective, qui peculiarem quandam ad finem supernaturalem et ad Deum qualis est in se, non qualis ex rebus creatis cognoscitur, ad ordinem scilicet supernaturalem, habitudinem importet, actuique fidei supernaturalem quandam tendentiam imprimat, et peculiare quoddam quasi lumen objectivum sub quo articulum, et quidem ut revelatum, attingat, subministret.

Note: This *assertum* treats the question of Faith in so far as it is supernatural. It all comes to this: that the act is not made by the faculty left to its own resources, but by the faculty aided by grace. Next we mention the controversy over the formal object of supernatural Faith, and we show briefly its philosophical connections. Thus we mention the necessity not to distinguish, as far as concerns the psychological process, between natural and supernatural Faith. Finally, we take our position, as theologian and for theological reasons, in the controversy over the formal object and we try to see and express in a manner which is necessarily a little vague, what is special to supernatural faith in this respect. See Chapters VIII and IX of the Part II.

APPENDIX B

TEXT OF CARDINAL BILLOT ON THE TWO KINDS OF FAITH

"Potest esse assensus *propter evidentiam in attestante,* seu pure et simpliciter quia evidens intellectui est quod in testificando testificans nec falli potuit nec fallere: puta, quia evidens mihi est aliquid fuisse attestatum ab eo qui est prima Veritas, vel quia evidens mihi est, post considerationem omnium circumstantiarum alicujus testimonii humani, quod in eo nec error obrepsit nec fallacia. Tunc evidentia illa non est tantum de prærequisitis ad assensum, sed est ipsum motivum super quo fundatur assensus, propriaque ratio mensurans ejus firmitatem ac certitudinem. . . . Nunc autem aliter omnino contingit dari assensum ex alterius testimonio, scilicet non præcise et formaliter propter affulgentem evidentiam veri testimonii, *sed propter dignitatem quam habet testificans ad hoc ut fidatur sibi, et sibi in tenendo id quod asserit, præcise quia asserit, mens audientis acquiescat.* Et hic modus multum differt a præcedenti. Primo differt, quia etsi evidentia etiam perfecta in attestante possit ibi concomitanter haberi, non tamen est ipsa assensus ratio formalis; non enim nunc assentior præcise quia mihi evidens est rem fuisse attestatam haud fallaci testimonio, ita scilicet ut gradus firmitatis seu certitudinis debeat commensurari gradui evidentiæ de testimonii veritate.—Secundo dif-

fert, quia scientia et veracitas testis quæ sufficere potest ad fidem priori modo dictam non sufficit ad fidem de qua in præsenti. Etenim, ad hoc ut habeatur evidentia in attestante, satis est ut appareat testem in casu determinato non fuisse *de facto* in errore, et *de facto* non esse mentitum, quod quidem contingere potuit etiam per accidens, seu præter morem et consuetudinem attestantis. At vero in præsenti *motivum assensus est dignitas vel jus loquentis ad docilem mentis acquiescentiam seu etiam submissionem.* Quæ quidem dignitas non est in eo qui per accidens non errat, et per accidens dicit veritatem, sed in eo solo qui in certo saltem ordine instruitur scientia, et præsertim habitu veracitatis.—Tertio differt, quia in fide cujus motivum est evidentia in attestante, requiritur quidem determinatio voluntatis, sed ubi dicta evidentia est perfecta, hæc determinatio necessario et inimpedibiliter sequitur. . . . At vero in fide cujus motivum est loquentis auctoritas sub formali ratione auctoritatis, cui dignum est acquiescere, voluntas est semper libera applicandi vel non applicandi intellectum ad hujusmodi obsequium. Unde etiam efficitur, hanc solam fidem, et non aliam, meritoriam esse posse atque ex parte credentis honorificam attestanti.—Quarto differt, quia in hac fide gradus firmitatis est semper secundum mensuram auctoritatis quæ in loquente noscitur existere, quidquid sit de perfectione evidentiæ sub qua hæc ipsa auctoritas mihi innotescit; adeoque, etsi evidentia quam habeo de divina infallibilitate et veracitate non sit super omnia, attamen quia semper scio auctoritatem Dei (si est) omnibus prævalere, credens propter auctoritatem Dei, semper credo assensu qui debet esse firmus super omnia.—

Quinto demum differt, quia qui credit propter evidentiam in attestante, etiam quando attestans est Deus, nunquam credit propter motivum increatum; evidentia enim cujuscunque enuntiabilis nobis propositi semper aliquid creatum est. Nunc autem qui credit propter auctoritatem Dei reduplicative in quantum hujusmodi, vere ponit actum theologicum, quia in assensu suo nititur alicui quod est a Deo indistinctum; unde tandem apparet quam vere dicat S. Thomas, objectum fidei christianæ esse ipsam primam Veritatem."

"Aliæ adhuc differentiæ notari possent. . . . Interim vero, id certissime ex præmissis constat: videlicet fidem proprio etiam sensu acceptam (in the sense of certain adhesion, opposed to opinion) dici analogice analogia proportionalitatis *tum de assensu qui nititur evidentia veri testimonii,* sicut cum historicus credit ea quæ in consentientibus testimoniis coævis narrata reperit, *tum de assensu qui nititur attestantis auctoritate formaliter sub ratione auctoritatis,* sicut cum puer credit matri et indoctus docto, vel cum in iis quæ ad ordinarium vitæ commercium pertinent, unusquisque credit audita a viro honesto, unice quia, ut præsumere licet, dignus est ille cui fidatur.—Insuper constat quod in hoc ultimo assentiendi modo tanquam in principe analogo per prius verificatur fidei ratio; ibi enim vel maxime aliquis assentitur *fidendo.* Ergo hæc est fides propriissime dicta quæ debetur Deo.[1]

[1] *De Virtutibus Infusis. Prolegomenon de Fide,* § 2, p. 203–207, 1901.

APPENDIX C

TEXT OF THE CONSTITUTION *DEI FILIUS*, PROMULGATED BY THE VATICAN COUNCIL, ON FAITH AND THE ACT OF FAITH

1. Two ways of knowing God: knowledge of reason through the created world, and knowledge of faith through revelation.—Sancta Mater Ecclesia tenet et docet Deum, rerum omnium principium et finem, naturali humanæ rationis lumine e rebus creatis certo cognosci posse: *Invisibilia enim ipsius, a creatura mundi, per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspiciuntur;* et tamen placuisse ejus sapientiae et bonitati alia eaque supernaturali via se ipsum ac aeterna voluntatis suae decreta humano generi revelare, dicente Apostolo: *Multifariam multisque modis olim Deus loquens patribus in Prophetis, novissime diebus istis locutus est nobis in Filio.* Extract from chapter 2, *De revelatione.*

2. Difference between the two degrees of knowledge.—Hoc quoque perpetuus Ecclesiae Catholicae consensus tenuit et tenet, duplicem esse ordinem cognitionis, non solum principio, sed objecto etiam distinctum: principio quidem, quia in altero naturali ratione, in altero fide divina cognoscimus; objecto autem, quia praeter ea, ad quae naturalis ratio pertingere potest, credenda nobis proponuntur mysteria in Deo abscondita, quae, nisi revelata

divinitus, innotescere non possunt. Quocirca Apostolus, qui a gentibus Deum per ea, quae facta sunt, cognitum esse testatur, disserens tamen de *gratia et veritate,* quae *per Jesum Christum facta est,* pronuntiat: *Loquimur Dei sapientiam in mysterio, quae abscondita est, quam nemo principum hujus saeculi cognovit: nobis autem revelavit Deus per Spiritum suum: Spiritus enim omnia scrutatur, etiam profunda Dei.* Et ipse Unigenitus confitetur Patri, quia *abscondit haec a sapientibus, et revelavit ea parvulis.* (Extract from ch. 4, *De fide et ratione.*)

3. Mysteries inaccessible to reason.—Ac ratio quidem, fide illustrata, cum sedulo, pie et sobrie quaerit, aliquam, Deo dante, mysteriorum intelligentiam eamque fructuosissimam assequitur, tum ex eorum, quae naturaliter cognoscit, analogia, tum e mysteriorum ipsorum nexu inter se et cum fine hominis ultimo; nunquam tamen idonea redditur ad ea perspicienda instar veritatum, quae proprium ipsius objectum constituunt. Divina enim mysteria suapte natura intellectum creatum sic excedunt, ut etiam revelatione tradita et fide susceptа, ipsius tamen fidei velamine contecta et quadam quasi caligine obvoluta maneant, quamdiu in hac mortali vita peregrinamur a Domino: *Per fidem enim ambulamus et non per speciem.* (Same chapter, can. 1.)

4. Mutual help of reason and faith.—Neque solum fides et ratio inter se dissidere nunquam possunt, sed opem quoque sibi mutuam ferunt, cum recta ratio fidei fundamenta demonstret, ejusque lumine illustrata rerum divinarum scientiam excolat; fides vero rationem ab erroribus liberet ac tueatur, eamque multiplici cognitione instruat. (*Ibid.*)

5. Metaphysical argument for the obligation to believe God when He speaks.—Cum homo a Deo tanquam Creatore et Domino suo totus dependeat, et ratio creata increatae veritati penitus subjecta sit, plenum revelanti Deo intellectus et voluntatis obsequium fide praestare tenemur. (Extract from ch. 3.)

6. The Notion of faith.—Hanc vero fidem, quae humanae salutis initium est, Ecclesia catholica profitetur virtutem esse supernaturalem qua, Dei aspirante et adjuvante gratia, ab eo revelata vera credimus, non propter intrinsecam rerum veritatem naturali rationis lumine perspectam, sed propter auctoritatem ipsius Dei revelantis, qui nec falli nec fallere potest. *Est enim fides,* testante Apostolo, *sperandarum substantia rerum, argumentum non apparentium.* (Extract from ch. 3, *De Fide.*)

Canon 1. Si quis dixerit rationem humanam ita independentem esse ut fides ei a Deo imperari non possit: anathema sit.

Canon 2. Si quis dixerit fidem divinam a naturali de Deo et rebus moralibus scientia non distingui, ac propterea ad fidem divinam non requiri ut revelata veritas propter auctoritatem Dei revelantis credatur: anathema sit. (Canons corresponding to ch. 3.)

7. Faith is reasonable; motives of credibility.—Ut nihilominus fidei nostrae obsequium rationi consentaneum esset, voluit Deus cum internis Spiritus Sancti auxiliis externa jungi revelationis suae argumenta, facta scilicet divina atque imprimis miracula et prophetias, quae cum Dei omnipotentiam et infinitam scientiam luculenter commonstrent, divinae revelationis signa sunt certissima et omnium intelligentia accommodata. Quare tum Moyses

et Prophetæ, tum ipse maxime Christus Dominus multa et manifestissima miracula et prophetias ediderunt; et de Apostolis legimus: *Illi autem profecti praedicaverunt ubique, Domino cooperante, et sermonem confirmante, sequentibus signis.* Et rursum scriptum est: *Habemus firmiorem propheticum sermonem, cui bene facitis attendentes quasi lucernae lucenti in caliginoso loco.* (Same chapter.)

Canon 3. Si quis dixerit revelationem divinam externis signis credibilem fieri non posse, ideoque sola interna cujusque experientia aut inspiratione privata homines ad fidem moveri debere: anathema sit. (Corresponding canon.)

8. Faith is supernatural and free.—Licet autem fidei assensus nequaquam sit motus animi caecus: nemo tamen "evangelicae praedicationi consentire potest, sicut oportet ad salutem consequendam, absque illuminatione et inspiratione Spiritus Sancti, qui dat omnibus suavitatem in consentiendo et credendo veritati" (Concil. Arausic.). Quare fides ipsa in se, etiamsi per charitatem non operetur, donum Dei est, et actus ejus est opus ad salutem pertinens, quo homo liberam praestat ipsi Deo obedientiam, gratiae ejus, cui resistere posset, consentiendo et cooperando. (*Ibid.*)

Canon 5. Si quis dixerit assensum fidei christianae non esse liberum, sed argumentis humanae rationis necessario produci . . . anathema sit. (Corresponding canon.)

9. The Church, motive of credibility for all.—Ut autem officio veram fidem amplectendi, in eaque constanter perseverandi satisfacere possemus, Deus per Filium suum unigenitum Ecclesiam instituit, suaeque institutionis

manifestis notis instruxit, ut ea tamquam custos et magistra verbi revelati ab omnibus posset agnosci. Ad solam enim catholicam Ecclesiam ea pertinent omnia, quae ad evidentem fidei christianae credibilitatem tam multa et tam mira divinitus sunt disposita. Quin etiam Ecclesia per se ipsa, ob suam nempe admirabilem propagationem, eximiam sanctitatem et inexhaustam in omnibus bonis fecunditatem, ob catholicam unitatem, invictamque stabilitatem magnum quoddam et perpetuum est motivum credibilitatis, et divinæ suæ legationis testimonium irrefregabile. Quo fit, ut ipsa veluti *signum levatum in nationes,* et ad se invitet eos qui nondum crediderunt, et filios suos certiores faciat, firmissimo niti fundamento fidem, quam profitentur. (*Ibid.*)

10. The rôle of grace; firmness of the Catholic in his faith.—Cui quidem testimonio efficax subsidium accedit ex superna virtute. Etenim benignissimus Dominus et errantes gratia sua excitat atque adjuvat, ut ad agnitionem veritatis venire possint; et eos, quos *de tenebris transtulit in admirabile lumen suum,* in hoc eodem lumine ut perseverent, gratia sua confirmat, *non deserens nisi deseratur.* Quocirca minime par est conditio eorum, qui per cæleste fidei donum catholicæ veritati adhaeserunt, atque eorum, qui ducti opinionibus humanis, falsam religionem sectantur; illi enim, qui fidem sub Ecclesiae magisterio susceperunt, nullam unquam habere possunt justam causam mutandi, aut in dubium fidem eamdem revocandi. Quae cum ita sint, *gratias agentes Deo Patri, qui dignos nos fecit in partem sortis sanctorum in lumine, tantam ne negligamus salutem, sed aspicientes in auctorem fidei et consummatorem Jesum, teneamus spei nostrae confessionem indeclinabilem.* (Same Chapter.)

APPENDIX D

TEXTS OF ST. THOMAS ON FAITH AND THE ACT OF FAITH

1. The Assent of Faith, distinguished from other assents.—Fides importat assensum intellectus ad id quod creditur. Assentit autem intellectus alicui dupliciter: uno modo quia ad hoc movetur ab ipso objecto, quod est vel per seipsum cognitum, sicut patet in principiis primis, quorum est intellectus; vel per aliud cognitum, sicut patet de conclusionibus, quarum est scientia. Alio modo intellectus assentit alicui, non quia sufficienter moveatur ab objecto proprio, sed per quandam electionem voluntarie declinans in unam partem magis quam in aliam; et si quidem hoc sit cum dubitatione et formidine alterius partis, erit opinio; si autem sit cum certitudine absque tali formidine, erit fides. (2a 2ae, qu. 1, art. 4.)

2. The assent of Faith is determined by the will, not by the object; there is place for intellectual uneasiness, in spite of the absolute firmness, since the mind does not have in it its proper determinant.

Apropos of the definition given by St. Augustine, "*credere est cum assensione cogitare,*" St. Thomas makes the known distinctions between simple apprehension and judgment; between assent and doubt or opinion; between the assent determined by the seeing of the object, immediate or mediate, and the assent determined by the will. He adds:

"Quandoque vero intellectus non potest determinari ad alteram partem contradictionis neque statim per ipsas definitiones terminorum, sicut in principiis, nec etiam virtute principiorum, sicut in conclusionibus demonstrativis . . . determinatur autem per voluntatem, qua eligit assentire uni parti determinate et praecise propter aliquid quod est sufficiens ad movendum voluntatem, non autem ad movendum intellectum, utpote quod videtur bonum vel conveniens huic parti assentire; et ista est dispositio credentis, ut cum aliquis credit dictis alicujus hominis, quia videtur decens vel utile: et sic etiam movemur ad credendum dictis [Dei] in quantum nobis repromittitur, si crediderimus, praemium aeternae vitae; et hoc praemio movetur voluntas ad assentiendum his quae dicuntur, quamvis intellectus non moveatur per aliquid intellectum. Et ideo Augustinus dicit quod *cetera potest homo nolens, credere non nisi volens.*"

Thus St. Thomas concludes, there is in faith "*assensus,*" and hence it is distinguished from simple apprehension, as from doubt or opinion; but there is also "*cogitatio,*" by which it is distinguished from immediate assent. In mediate assent or the assent of science, there are "*assensus*" and "*cogitatio,*" but "*cogitatio terminans assensum et assensus terminans cogitationem.*" He adds:

"Ex ipsa enim collatione principiorum ad conclusiones assentit [sciens] conclusionibus resolvendo eas in principia, et ibi figitur motus cogitantis et quietatur. In scientia enim motus rationis incipit ab intellectu principiorum, et ad eundem terminatur per viam resolutionis; et sic non habet assensum et cogitationem quasi ex aequo, sed cogitatio inducit ad assensum et assensus quietat.

Sed in fide est assensus et cogitatio quasi ex aequo. Non enim assensus ex cogitatione causatur, sed ex voluntate, ut dictum est. Sed quia intellectus non hoc modo terminatur ad unum ut ad proprium terminum perducatur, qui est visio alicujus intelligibilis, inde est quo ejus motus nondum est quietatus, sed habet cogitationem et inquisitionem de his quae credit, quamvis firmissime eis assentiat: quantum enim est ex se ipso, non est ei satisfactum, nec est terminatus ad unum, sed terminatur tantum ex extrinseco. Et inde est quod intellectus credentis dicitur esse captivatus (*2 Cor.* 10, 5), quia tenetur terminis alienis, et non propriis." (*Q. disp. de Veritate,* qu. 14, art. 1.)

3. Constitutive principles of Faith.

Apropos of the definition of Faith given in the Epistle to the Hebrews, xi, "*fides est sperandarum substantia rerum, argumentum non apparentium.*"

"Cum dispositio credentis, ut supra dictum est, talis sit quod intellectus determinetur ad aliquid per voluntatem, voluntas autem nihil facit nisi secundum quod est mota per suum objectum, quod est bonum appetibile et finis, requiritur ad fidem duplex principium: unum principium, quod est bonum movens voluntatem; et secundum, id cui intellectus assentit voluntate faciente."

The good which here moves the will, is the supernatural end in perspective and the Faith of which has already begun in so far that it makes known to us in some manner the God whom we shall see.

"Voluntas autem mota a bono praedicto proponit aliquid intellectui non apparens, ut dignum cui assentiatur; et sic determinat ipsum ad illud non apparens, ut scilicet

ei assentiat. Sicut igitur intelligibile quod est visum ab intellectu determinat intellectum, et ex hoc dicitur mentem arguere; ita etiam et aliquid non apparens intellectui determinat ipsum et arguit necessario, ex hoc ipso quod est a voluntate acceptatum, ut cui assentiatur."

Whence the formal definition, according to the elements given by the Apostle:

"Fides est habitus mentis qua inchoatur vita aeterna in nobis, faciens intellectum non apparentibus assentire." (*Q. disp. De Veritate,* qu. 14, art. 2.)

4. The three aspects of Faith: material object, formal object, moved by the will.—Actus cujus-libet potentiae vel habitus accipitur secundum ordinem potentiae vel habitus ad suum objectum. Objectum autem fidei potest tripliciter considerari. Cum enim credere ad intellectum pertineat, prout est a voluntate motus ad assentiendum . . . potest objectum fidei accipi vel ex parte ipsius intellectus, vel ex parte voluntatis intellectum moventis.

"Si quidem ex parte intellectus, sic in objecto fidei duo possunt considerari. . . . Quorum unum est materiale objectum fidei; et sic ponitur actus fidei *credere Deum,* quia . . . nihil proponitur nobis ad credendum, nisi secundum quod ad Deum pertinet. Alliud autem est formalis ratio objecti, quod est sicut medium propter quod tali credibili assentitur; et sic ponitur actus fidei *credere Deo,* quia . . . formale objectum fidei est veritas prima, cui inhaeret homo ut propter eam creditis assentiatur. Si vero consideretur tertio modo objectum fidei, secundum quod intellectus est motus a voluntate, sic ponitur actus fidei *credere in Deum;* veritas enim prima ad voluntatem re-

fertur secundum quod habet rationem finis." (2a, 2ae, qu. 2, art. 2.)

5. The conditions of Faith: object revealed by God, immediately or mediately, exterior reasons for believing, interior motion of grace.—"Ad fidem duo requiruntur. Quorum unum est ut homini credibilia proponantur: quod requiritur ad hoc quod homo aliquid explicite credat. Aliud autem quod ad fidem requiritur est assensus credentis ad ea quae proponuntur. Quantum ergo ad primum horum, necesse est quod fides sit a Deo. Ea enim quae sunt fidei excedunt rationem humanam; unde non cadunt in cognitionem hominis nisi Deo revelante. Sed quibusdam quidem revelantur immediate a Deo, sicut sunt revelata Apostolis et Prophetis; quibusdam autem proponuntur a Deo mittente fidei praedicatores. Quantum vero ad secundum, scilicet ad assensum hominis in ea quae sunt fidei, potest considerari duplex causa: una quidem exterius inducens, sicut miraculum visum vel persuasio hominis inducentis ad fidem. Quorum neutrum est sufficiens causa: videntium enim unum et idem miraculum, et audientium eamdem praedicationem quidam credunt et quidam non credunt. Et ideo oportet ponere aliam causam interiorem quae movet hominem interius ad assentiendum his quae sunt fidei. Hanc autem causam Pelagiani ponebant solum liberum arbitrium hominis, et propter hoc dicebant quod initium fidei est ex nobis, in quantum scilicet ex nobis est quod parati sumus ad assentiendum his quae sunt fidei, sed consummatio fidei est a Deo, per quem nobis proponuntur ea quae credere debemus. Sed hoc est falsum: quia cum homo assentiendo his quae sunt fidei elevetur supra naturam suam, oportet

quod hoc insit ei ex supernaturali principio interius movente, quod est Deus. Et ideo fides quantum ad assensum, qui est principalis actus fidei, est a Deo interius movente per gratiam." (2a 2ae, qu. 6, art. 1.)

6. The formal reason of Faith, the Authority of God who reveals.—"Si in fide consideremus formalem rationem objecti, nihil est aliud quam veritas prima. Non enim fides de qua loquimur assentit alicui, nisi quia est a Deo revelatum. Unde ipsi veritati divinae fides innititur tanquam medio." (2a 2ae, qu. 1, art. 1.)

He said, in the beginning of the article, that, in geometry, for example, *"materialiter scita sunt conclusiones, formalis vero ratio sciendi sunt media demonstrationis, per quae conclusiones cognoscuntur."* He explains (2a 2ae, qu. 1, art. 3), that divine faith is always true, since the divine authority cannot shield falsehood. For anything is an object of faith only in so far as it is stamped with divine authority, which is *"ratio formalis objecti,"* nothing falls under an act or under a power or under a *"habitus,"* unless it is *"mediante ratione formali objecti; sicut color videri non potest nisi per lucem, et conclusio sciri non potest* (as conclusion) *nisi per medium demonstrationis."*

7. The First Truth in Faith.—"Veritas prima se habet in fide et ut medium et ut objectum." (*De Verit.*, qu. 14, art. 8, ad 9.)

"Pro tanto veritas prima dicitur esse fidei objectum quia de ea est fides. . . . Ipsum autem testimonium veritatis primae se habet in fide ut principium in scientiis demonstrativis." (*Ibid.*, art. 8, ad 16.)

8. In the assent of Faith, there is intervention of the

will; but there is a forced Faith by the evidence of the reasons, it is that of the demons; there is a Faith given in respect to God: that is moral faith.—"Intellectus credentis assentit rei creditae, non quia ipsam videat vel secundum se vel per resolutionem ad prima principia per se visa, sed propter imperium voluntatis moventis intellectum. Quod autem voluntas moveat intellectum, potest contingere ex duobus: uno modo ex ordine voluntatis ad bonum, et sic credere est actus laudabilis; alio modo quia intellectus convincitur ad hoc quod judicet esse credendum his quae dicuntur, licet non convincatur per evidentiam rei: sicut si aliquis propheta praenuntiaret in sermone Domini aliquid futurum, et adhiberet signum, mortuum suscitando, ex hoc signo convinceretur intellectus videntis ut cognosceret manifeste hoc dici a Deo qui non mentitur, licet illud futurum quod praedicitur in se evidens non esset. Unde per hoc ratio fidei non tolleretur. Dicendum est ergo quod in fidelibus Christi laudatur fides secundum primum modum; et secundum hoc, non est in daemonibus, sed solum secundo modo; vident enim multa manifesta indicia ex quibus percipiunt doctrinam Ecclesiae a Deo esse." (2a 2ae, qu. 5, art. 2.)

9. The heretic, as such, has only the appearances of Faith, even in what he admits together with the faithful: He has not the real motive of Faith.—"In haeretico discredente unum articulum fidei non manet fides. . . . Cujus ratio est, quia species cujuslibet habitus dependet ex formali ratione objecti, qua sublata species habitus remanere non potest. Formale autem objectum fidei est veritas prima, secundum quod manifestatur in Scripturis sacris et doctrina Ecclesiae, quae procedit ex veritate

prima. Unde quicumque non inhaeret, sicut infallibili et divinae regulae, doctrinae Ecclesiae, quae procedit ex veritate prima in Scripturis sacris manifesta, ille non habet habitum fidei, seu ea quae sunt fidei alio modo tenet quam per fidem: sicut si aliquis tenet mente aliquam conclusionem, non cognoscens medium demonstrationis, manifestum est quod non habet ejus scientiam, sed opinionem solum. Manifestum est autem quod ille qui inhaeret doctrinae Ecclesiae, tanquam infallibili regulae, omnibus assentit quae Ecclesia docet; alioquin si de his quae Ecclesia docet quae vult tenet et quae non vult non tenet, non jam inhaeret Ecclesiae doctrinae, sicut infallibili regulae, sed propriae voluntati. Et sic manifestum est quod haereticus qui pertinaciter discredit unum articulum fidei, non est paratus sequi in omnibus doctrinam Ecclesiae: si enim non pertinaciter, jam non est haereticus, sed solum errans." (2a 2ae, qu. 5, art. 3.)

10. There is, in Faith, a tendency of the will towards the person whose statements one believes; and it is especially the Person and not so much the statements that the will acknowledges.—"In credendis voluntas assentit alicui vero tanquam bono proprio. . . . Unde quod est principale verum habet rationem finis ultimi: quæ autem secundaria sunt habent rationem horum quae sunt ad fidem. Quia vero quicumque credit, alicujus dicto assentit, principale videtur esse et quasi finis in unaquaque credulitate ille cujus dicto assentitur: quasi autem secundaria sunt ea quae quis tenendo vult alicui assentire. Sic ergo qui recte fidem christianam habet, sua voluntate assentit Christo in his quae vere ad ejus doctrinam pertinent." (2a 2ae, qu. 11, art. 1.)

11. The will is essential to Faïth.—"Fides non est in intellectu nisi secundum quod imperatur a voluntate. . . . Unde, quamvis illud quod est ex parte voluntatis possit dici accidentale intellectui, est tamen essentiale fidei, sicut id quod est rationis est accidentale concupiscibili, essentiale autem temperantiae." (*De Verit.*, qu. 14, art. 3, ad 10.)

12. What Determines the assent of Faith.—"Intellectus credentis determinatur ad unum, non per rationem, sed per voluntatem, et ideo assensus hic accipitur pro actu intellectus, secundum quod a voluntate determinatur ad unum." (2a 2ae, qu. 2, art. 1, ad 3.)

13. Reasoning in Faith.—"Fides non habet inquisitionem rationis naturalis demonstrantis id quod creditur; habet tamen inquisitionem quandam eorum per quae inducitur homo ad credendum, puta quia sunt dicta a Deo, et miraculis confirmata." (2a 2ae, qu. 2, art. 1, ad 1.)

14. Faith is prudent but free and meritorious.—"Ille qui credit, habet sufficiens inductivum ad credendum; inducitur enim auctoritate divinae doctrinae miraculis confirmatae, et quod plus est, interiori instinctu Dei invitantis: unde non leviter credit. Tamen non habet sufficiens inductivum ad sciendum: et ideo non tollitur ratio meriti." (2a 2ae, qu. 1, art. 9, ad 3.)

15. It is not fickleness to believe things that are of Faith, though they surpass reason when one has motives to believe as we have.—"Huiusmodi autem veritati, cui ratio humana experimentum non praebet, fidem adhibentes non leviter credunt, quasi *doctas fabulas secuti.* . . ."

"Haec enim divinae sapientiae secreta ipsa divina Sapientia, quae omnia plenissime novit, dignata est homi-

nibus revelare, quae sui praesentiam et doctrinae et inspirationis veritatem convenientibus argumentis ostendit, dum ad confirmandum ea quae naturalem cognitionem excedunt, opera visibiliter ostendit, quae totius naturae superant facultatem: videlicet in mirabili curatione languorum, mortuorum suscitatione, caelestium corporum mirabili immutatione, et, quod est mirabilius, humanarum mentium inspiratione, ut idiotae et simplices, dono Spiritus Sancti repleti, summam sapientiam et facundiam in instanti consequerentur.

"Quibus inspectis, praedictae praedicationis efficacia, non armorum violentia, non voluptatum promissione, et quod est mirabilissimum, inter persecutorum tyrannidem, innumerabilis turba non solum simplicium, sed etiam sapientissimorum hominum ad fidem christianam convolavit: in qua omnem humanum intellectum excedentia praedicantur, voluptates carnis cohibentur, et omnia quae in mundo sunt, haberi contemptui docentur. Quibus animos mortalium assentire et maximum miraculum est, et manifestum divinae inspirationis opus, ut, contemptis visibilibus, sola invisibilia cupiantur. Hoc autem non subito neque casu, sed divina dispositione factum esse manifestum est ex hoc quod hoc se facturum Deus multis ante prophetarum praedixit oraculis, quorum libri apud nos habentur, utpote nostrae fidei testimonium adhibentes. . . . Haec autem tam mirabilis mundi conversio ad fidem christianam indicium certissimum est praeteritorum signorum, ut ea ulterius iterari necesse non sit, cum in suo effectu appareant evidenter. Esset autem omnibus signis mirabilius, si ad credendum tam ardua et operandum tam

difficilia et ad sperandum tam alta mundus absque mirabilibus signis inductus fuisset a simplicibus et ignobilibus hominibus: quamvis non cesset Deus, etiam nostris temporibus, ad confirmationem fidei per sanctos suos miracula operari." (*Contra Gent.*, I, 8.)

16. The object in Faith, seen as believable.—"Ea quae subsunt fidei, dupliciter considerari possunt, uno modo in speciali, et sic non possunt esse simul visa et credita . . . ; alio modo in generali, scilicet sub communi ratione credibilis, et sic sunt visa ab eo qui credit. Non enim crederet nisi videret ea esse credenda vel propter evidentiam signorum, vel propter aliquid hujusmodi." (2a 2ae, qu. 5, art. 3, and 2.)

17. The first truth the Object of Faith, "prout est non apparens."—"Ipsa . . . veritas prima, prout est non apparens, est objectum fidei: dico autem non apparens nec per speciem, sicut beatis apparet, nec per naturalem rationem, sicut aliqua philosophis de Deo sunt nota, ut eum esse incorruptibilem . . . et alia hujusmodi." (*De Verit.*, qu. 18, art. 3.)

18. The *ratio rei non visae* in Faith.—"Veritas prima est objectum fidei, secundum quod ipsa est non visa, et ea quibus propter ipsam inhaeretur, et secundum hoc oportet quod ipsa veritas prima se habeat ad actum fidei per modum finis secundum rationem rei non visae, quod pertinet ad rationem rei speratae. . . . Veritatem enim videre est ipsam habere. Per hunc ergo modum dicitur fides esse *substantia rerum sperandarum*, quia scilicet prima inchoatio rerum sperandarum in nobis est per assensum fidei quae virtute continet omnes res sperandas.

In hoc enim speramus beatificari quod videbimus aperta visione veritatem cui per fidem adhaeremus." (2a 2ae, qu. 4, art. 1.)

19. Faith is an act of knowledge, but with the intervention of the will; at the start to determine the mind, at the end to give the mind its normal perfection.—(*a*) "Fides est in cognitiva: quod patet ex hoc quod proprium objectum fidei est verum, non autem bonum." (*De Verit.*, qu. 14, art. 2, ad 3.) (*b*) "Actus fidei essentialiter consistit in cognitione, et ibi est eius perfectio quantum ad formam vel speciem. . . . Sed quantum ad finem perficitur in affectione, quia ex caritate habet quod sit meritoria fides. Inchoatio etiam fidei est in affectione, in quantum voluntas determinat intellectum ad assentiendum his quae sunt fidei. Sed illa voluntas nec est actus caritatis nec spei, sed quidam appetitus boni repromissi." (*Ibid.*, ad 10.)

20. In what sense Faith is *supra rationem*.—"Dicitur fides supra rationem esse, non quod nullus actus rationis sit in fide; sed quia ratio non potest perducere ad videndum ea quae sunt fidei." (*Ibid.*, ad 9.)

21. The important factor in Faith is the will to believe upon the Authority of God.—"Quando . . . homo habet voluntatem credendi ea quae sunt fidei ex sola auctoritate divina, etiamsi habeat rationem demonstrativam ad aliquid eorum, puta ad hoc quod est Deum esse, non propter hoc tollitur vel diminuitur meritum fidei." (2a 2ae, qu. 2, art. 10, ad 1.)

22. Certitude, in itself, has not its proper motive, which is the evidence.—"Certitudo duo potest importare, scilicet firmitatem adhaesionis, et quantum ad hoc fides est

certior omni intellectu et scientia, quia prima veritas, quae causat fidei assensum, est fortior causa quam lumen rationis, quod causat assensum intellectus vel scientiae; importat etiam evidentiam ejus cui assentitur, et sic fides non habet certitudinem." (*De Verit.*, qu. 14, art. 1, ad 7.)

23. The knowledge of Faith, imperfect as knowledge. —"In cognitione . . . fidei invenitur operatio intellectus imperfectissima quantum ad id quod est ex parte intellectus, quamvis maxima perfectio inveniatur ex parte obiecti; non enim intellectus capit illud cui assentit credendo." (*C. Gent.*, III, 40.)

24. Primacy of the will in Faith.—"In cognitione fidei principalitatem habet voluntas: intellectus enim assentit per fidem his quae sibi proponuntur, quia vult, non autem ex ipsa veritatis evidentia necessario tractus." (*Ibid.*)

25. Faith supposes knowledge in him whom one believes.—"Qui credit assensum praebet his quae sibi ab alio proponuntur, quae ipse non videt; unde fides magis habet cognitionem auditui similem quam visioni. Non autem crederet aliquis non visis ab aliquo propositis, nisi aestimaret eum perfectiorem cognitionem habere de propositis quam ipse habeat qui non videt." (*Ibid.*)

26. The knowledge of Faith does not satisfy, rather it enflames desire.—"Cognitio . . . fidei non quietat desiderium, sed magis ipsum accendit, quia unusquisque desiderat videre quod credit." (*Ibid.*)

27. One must begin with believing, later one understands.—"Cum aliquis a magistro docetur, oportet quod a principio conceptiones magistri recipiat, non quasi eas

per se intelligens, sed per modum credulitatis, quasi supra suam capacitatem existentes; in fine autem quando iam edoctus fuerit, eas poterit intelligere." (*C. Gent.*, III, 152.)

28. The object of Faith simple in itself, complex in our mind; but our mind reaches the thing in the saying.—"Objectum fidei dupliciter considerari potest: uno modo ex parte ipsius rei creditae, et sic objectum fidei est aliquid incomplexum, scilicet res ipsa de qua fides habetur. Alio modo ex parte credentis; et secundum hoc, objectum fidei est aliquid complexum per modum enuntiabilis." (2a 2ae, qu. 1, act. 1.)

"In symbolo tanguntur ea de quibus est fides in quantum ad ea terminatur actus credentis, ut ex ipso modo loquendi apparet (*Credo in Deum* . . .). Actus autem credentis non terminatur ad enuntiabile, sed ad rem. Non enim formamus enuntiabilia, nisi ut per ea de rebus cognitionem habeamus, sicut in scientia, ita et in fide." (*Ibid.*, ad 2.)

29. By Faith, we are placed in the school of God, in order that we may see Him one day.—"Perfectio . . . rationalis creaturae non solum consistit in eo quod ei competit secundum suam naturam, sed in eo etiam quod ei attribuitur ex quadam supernaturali participatione divinae bonitatis. Unde et supra dictum est quod ultima beatitudo hominis consistit in quadam supernaturali Dei visione. Ad quam quidem visionem homo pertingere non potest nisi per modum addiscentis a Deo doctore. . . . Hujus autem disciplinae fit homo particeps non statim, sed successive, secundum modum suae naturae. Omnis autem talis addiscens oportet quod credat, ad hoc quod

ad perfectam scientiam perveniat; sicut etiam Philosophus dicit quod *oportet addiscentem credere.* Unde ad hoc quod homo perveniat ad perfectam visionem beatitudinis, praeexigitur quod credat Deo, tanquam discipulus magistro docenti." (2a 2ae, qu. 2, art. 3.)

30. Double mode of revelation and double word of God, interior and exterior; Adam had interior revelation by word.—"Sed fides est duplex, scilicet secundum duplicem auditum et duplicem locutionem. Est enim fides ex auditu. . . . Est etiam quaedam locutio exterior, qua Deus nobis per praedicatores loquitur; quaedam interior, qua loquitur nobis per inspirationem internam. Dicitur autem ipsa interior inspiratio locutio quaedam ad similitudinem exterioris locutionis: sicut enim in exteriori locutione proferimus ad ipsum audientem non ipsam rem quam notificare cupimus, sed signum illius rei, scilicet vocem significativam; ita Deus interius inspirando non exhibet essentiam suam ad videndum, sed aliquod suae essentiae signum, quod est aliqua spiritualis similitudo suae sapientiae. Ab utroque auditu fides in cordibus fidelium oritur. Per auditum interiorem in his qui fidem primo acceperunt et docuerunt, sicut in Apostolis et Prophetis. . . . Per secundum vero auditum fides oritur in cordibus aliorum fidelium, qui per alios homines cognitionem fidei accipiunt. Adam autem primo fidem habuit, et primo est fidem edoctus a Deo; et ideo per internam locutionem fidem habere debuit." (*De Verit.*, qu. 18, art. 3.)

THE END

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